CANADA'S HISTORY MAGAZINE

# The Beaver

APRIL | MAY 2000 $4.95

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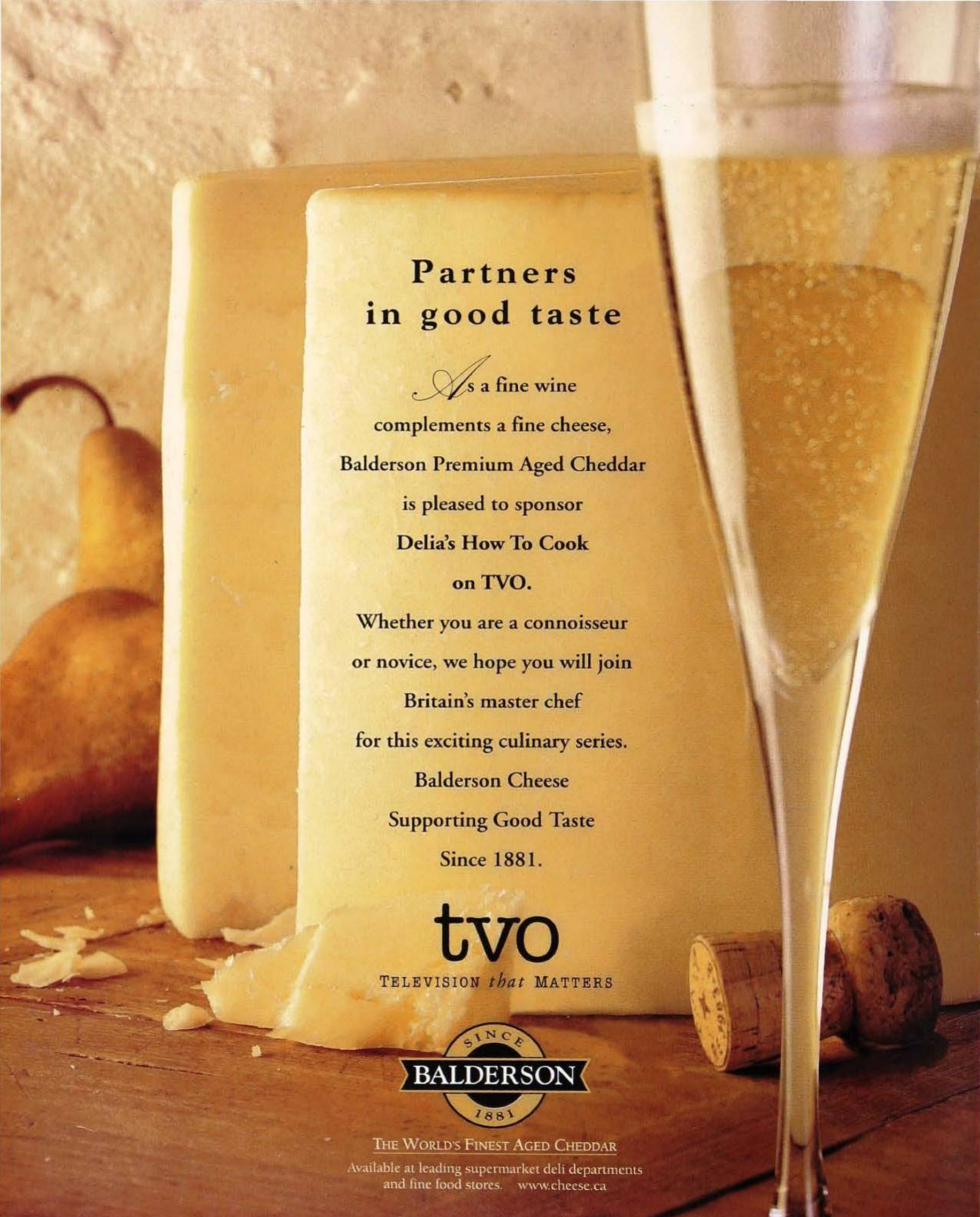
*Phone Feud:* Brantford vs Hollywood

*A Lens Maker's Legacy*

Walking Across Newfoundland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# *The* Beaver

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# Letters

The *Beaver* welcomes readers' comments. E-mail us at <cnhs@historysociety.ca> or write to *The Beaver*, 478–167 Lombard Avenue, Winnipeg, Manitoba, Canada R3B 0T6. Please include your address and daytime phone number. Letters may be edited for clarity or length.

## Striking a balance

RE: "GOING, GOING, GONE: Selling Canadian Heritage on the Internet," J.L. Cook & P. Potvin [Oct./Nov. 1999].

The Cultural Property Export and Import Act is based, as is most Canadian law, on the premise of voluntary compliance. Thus, it is the responsibility of Canadian vendors to educate themselves and comply with the export permit requirements on behalf of foreign buyers, that if avoided, could subject them to conviction under section 45 of the Act. Export permits are only issued to Canadian residents.

Contrary to the dire predictions about how the heritage universe would unfold in this case, events were as follows. The owner of the bedroom suite, having consulted the Canadian Cultural Property Export Control List concluded that a permit was required based on its age and value. Indeed, before the auction took place, the Internet Auction House submitted to Canada Customs an export permit application. The export examiner in this case recommended refusal of the permit on the basis of the suite's significance as nineteenth-century Canadian furniture and took no position on the validity of the attribution to Sir John A. Thus the permit was refused by the permit officer at Canada Customs on April 29, 1999.

An appeal was then registered by the Internet Auction House. The appeal was heard by the Canadian Cultural Property Export Review Board on September 21, 1999, and the decision of the export examiner was upheld by the board, which established a two-month delay period to provide Canadian museums and other designated institutions the opportunity to purchase the suite. I should explain, in this regard, that there is also a provision under the Act for the minister of Canadian Heritage to make grants to facilitate the purchase by interested Canadian institutions of cultural property subject to a delay period, and there is a generous tax benefit available for vendors of such property to a designated Canadian institution or public authority. In the event, no Canadian institution came forward to purchase the bedroom suite, and at the expiry of the delay period, the owner requested and received, as is his right under the Act, his export permit on November 26, 1999.

Canada's cultural property legislation was designed to strike a balance between the need to conserve in our country heritage items of outstanding importance to the nation and the right of the individual to participate in the marketplace with their personal property as part of legitimate international commerce in cultural property.

Thus it can be said that in the case of the "Macdonald" suite, the universe did unfold as provided for under the Act, and your readers should have no legitimate fears that the Internet will significantly change matters. It certainly won't change inevitable controversy over undocumented attributions—*caveat emptor!*

***Ian Christie Clark***
***Chairman, Canadian Cultural Property Export Review Board***
***Hull, Quebec***


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E-mail: <cnhs@historysociety.ca>
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Phone: (416) 323-9991
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## Millennium? Shocked ...

RE: YOUR COMMENT ON PAGE 8 of the December 1999/January 2000 issue that the end of December 1999 ends a millennium and that Europe marked the birth of Christ 2000 years earlier, in creating what is now our civil calendar. Surely historians know that the originators of our calendar estimated Christ's birth near the beginning of year 1 A.D. The first millennium A.D. begins on January 1, year 0001. The third millennium A.D. begins 2000 years later, on January 1, year 2001. The twentieth century A.D. ends at the end of year 2000.

Estimates of the actual birth of Christ vary from 8 B.C. through 4 A.D. Historically, we do not know and probably never will know the exact year of Christ's birth. As well you know, this uncertainty has no effect on our civil calendar.

Our Canadian government appears to be a main instigator of our millennium celebrations at the beginning of year 2000. I have even heard two supreme court judges, one outgoing and one incoming, refer to the beginning of year 2000 as the start of the new millennium. As a new subscriber to the *Beaver*, I was favourably impressed with your articles on Canadian history. It came as quite a shock to read your editorial comments. Surely you could have published the millennium articles as being timely because of the approaching celebrations, and introduce them with a few honest remarks.

As history's guardian, you should not have jumped on the millennium bandwagon.

***Hugh Pettigrew***
***Ottawa, Ontario***

## Unacceptable ...

IT IS UNACCEPTABLE for an intellectually high-caliber publication as yours to repeat the dumb nonsense of almost everyone wanting the new millennium to start 1/1/2000. Sorry, but the new millennium starts 1/1/2001. If you don't believe it, count to ten using your fingers! So, please let's keep our historical *and* mathematical facts straight! On a more positive note, that gives you another twelve months writing about this eventful millennium!

***Stefan Wiesen***
***Caledon, Ontario***

## Wrong ...

ONE WOULD EXPECT the *Beaver*, Canada's History Magazine, to know when one century ends and the next one begins, but text on page 8 of the December 1999/January 2000 issue shows otherwise.

In what looks like an editorial introduction, the author manages within the confines of seventeen words to be wrong on this fundamental of calendar time, in both official languages by saying that "this month we find ourselves at the *fin* not only of a *siècle* but of a millennium." How can a publication which fails to deal correctly with obvious matters of the present be trusted to faithfully interpret subtle indicators of the past?

A statement on page 24 ("Canada entered the twentieth century ... on January 1, 1901."), combined with the statement on page 8, which it contradicts, shows that the *Beaver* stands unequivocally on both sides of the question.

Do you not know, do you not care or did you just make a mistake?

***David H. Webster***
***Kentville, Nova Scotia***

THE BEAVER RESPONDS:

Did the new millennium begin on January 1, 2000? Or do we have to wait another nine months for it to begin January 1, 2001?

With a few exceptions, virtually the entire world voted with its feet, its raised glasses, and its proffered credit cards, that the new millennium began January 1, 2000. Indeed, the planet had been preparing in earnest to celebrate that date for some few years before.

Though the *Beaver* is dedicated to the exploration of Canadian history, it is also a popular, not an academic, magazine. While cognizant of the debate over the true beginning of the third millennium, we nevertheless felt it would be entirely too pedantic of us to wait another year to mark the calendar change while all around us people were enjoying the pleasures of the changeover, even if (perhaps) twelve months early. We expected, of course, that some correspondents would write to object to our editorial choices, and we were not disappointed. All were adamant that the third millennium will not begin until January 1, 2001.

But does it? While there seems to be consensus that Quebec City was founded in 1608 and Nunavut was founded in 1999, consensus isn't quite diamond-hard when it comes to the founding of the Christian era. Nobody is sure when Jesus was born (4 B.C. seems to be the current consensus) but that is hardly the problem. The trouble begins with the well-meaning religious fathers who began to count the Christian era forward from the year 1, and then the pre-Christian era back from the year –1. The year 0 went missing, which is not surprising since the Western world was not familiar with the concept of zero until the twelfth century. We may skip a year in our counting if we like, but there was a year 0 on this Earth once upon a time. People lived through it, though they were unaware of the designation. Had the Church fathers been aware of the concept of zero, it's not unreasonable to think that they would have begun counting the Christian era from the year 0, not the year 1, and that all subsequent century beginnings would have been in 0. But they didn't, and so readers who point out that the new millennium begins in 2001 are correct mathematically. But the maths begins with a faulty choice in a mathematically unenlightened culture.

Is it vital that the *Beaver* record Quebec City's founding to be 1608 rather than 1609? Yes, it is. Is it vital that the *Beaver* declare the beginning of the third millennium to be 2000 or 2001? When nothing important is at stake, we're prepared to be accommodating.

## Doukhobor dispersal

FURTHER TO THE STORY "Resurrection" on the Doukhobors in the October/November 1999 issue: in 1905, Ottawa lost patience and demanded land title registration of all Doukhobor lands on penalty of forfeit. Nearly one hundred Doukhobor families refused and lost their property. This was the genesis of Verigin's trek to B.C. In 1907, there was a mini land rush in Yorkton when the forfeited lands were opened to homesteaders.

***J.R. Downs***
***Ottawa, Ontario***

*continued on page 51*

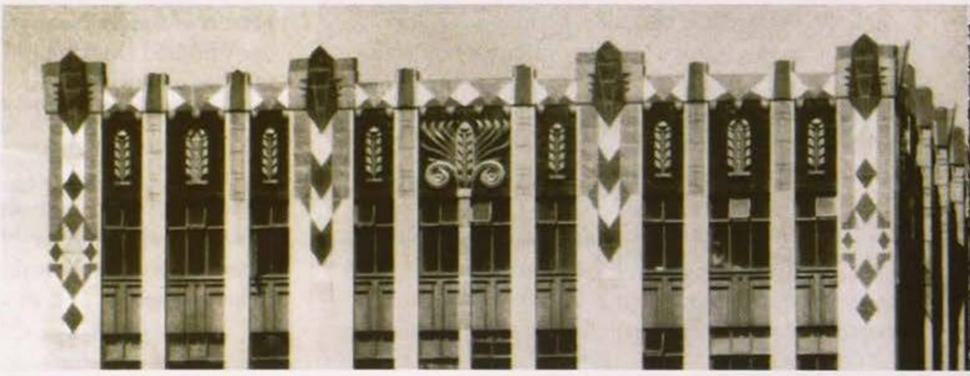
# Currents

## Going, going ... gone?

Art deco, the geometric decorative style that reached its peak in the 1920s and early '30s, is not all that well represented in Canada, at least architecturally speaking. In the history of world architecture, the fashion for deco was fleeting. And since Canada's economy in the post-World War I period failed to match the exuberance of the United States's (for example), the opportunities for building sprees were fewer. Still, such art deco gems as Montreal's Aldred Building, Vancouver's Marine Building, and Toronto's Concourse Building rose as monuments to the once hip aesthetic that combined the solemnity of classicism and the whoop-de-doo of the Jazz Age. Now, however, one of them is facing the wrecker's ball. The sixteen-storey Concourse Building at 100 Adelaide Street West in downtown Toronto is scheduled for demolition to make way for new forty-one storey development. (Sixteen storeys may have been a skyscraper in Toronto in 1929, but in 2000? *Fuggedabuddit*.) Naturally, those interested in architectural conservancy are not best pleased by the possibility. Architects L.C. Baldwin and G.E.D. Greene designed three art deco office buildings for Toronto at the end of the '20s, one of which, the Central Building, has already been demolished. With only two left, the push is on to at least save important architectural elements of the Concourse, considered the most colourful and ornamental of the three. Red, blue, and white chevrons, abstract geometrical shapes, and stylized organic forms resembling *fleurs de lis* and wheat stalks currently ornament the parapet, while the Romanesque entranceway is decorated with colourful mosaic tile designed by none other than Group of Seven painter J.E.H. MacDonald. His artwork, symbolizing natural and human forms, continued into the lobby, but no one is sure today if subsequent characterless renovations destroyed, or merely covered, his creations. Will MacDonald's work be uncovered? Can the Concourse be saved? Will the deco delights turn into mere architectural pastiche on some twenty-first-century monolith? Is that better than nothing? These and other controversies await the deliberations of bureaucrats, the designs of developers, and resolve of heritage advocates. Art deco lovers of Canada unite: you have nothing to lose but your chevrons.

## Kiss me, I'm Icelandic

The last census (1996) reported 70,685 Canadians claiming Icelandic descent – less than a third of 1 percent of the population – but this year in Canada Icelanders are planning to celebrate out of all proportion to their numbers. Some belated millennial thing? Nope. It's a quasquicentennial thing, and belated it ain't. One hundred and twenty-five years ago, 235 Icelanders landed on the west shore of Lake Winnipeg and established New Iceland, the mother colony of North American Icelandic settlements and, until its incorporation into the province of Manitoba (which extended its boundaries northward in 1881), an unusual experiment in self-government in Canadian history: For a brief time, Icelanders in Canada could make their own laws and manage their own affairs. Well, that couldn't last, could it? Nonetheless, celebrations of the Icelandic presence in Canada begin April 12 when Jean Chrétien and David Oddsson, respective prime ministers of Canada and Iceland, grin'n'grip at Ottawa's Museum of Civilization, and Chrétien receives on behalf of the nation a statue of Gudridur Thorbjarnardottir, the first European woman to reach the coast of North America a thousand years ago, and her son, Snorri Thorfinnsson, the first child of European origin born in North America. From then on to 2001, it's nothing but picnics, parties, and balls! No, that's not quite true. There are lots of edifying events as well – Icelandic film festivals, the issuing of commemorative stamps, symposia on such people as Arnes, Manitoba-born Arctic explorer and anthropologist Vilhjalmur Stefansson, the unveiling of a statue at Kinmount, Ontario to commemorate an aborted nineteenth-century Icelandic settlement. But the lion's share of events, not unnaturally, is scheduled to take place in Manitoba. The New Iceland Heritage Museum opens in Gimli on October 21; the same month the second-largest Icelandic library outside of Iceland opens new premises at the University of Manitoba. No word yet, however, on anyone baking the world's largest *vinaterta* for the *Guinness Book of World Records*.



NICK VAN DER GRAAF

## Eastward Ho!

Last year, the Royal Canadian Mounted Police, as part of their 125th anniversary celebrations, reenacted the North-West Mounted Police's Great March West, travelling west to considerable notice from Fort Dufferin, near present-day Emerson, Manitoba to Fort Macleod in Alberta.

This year there'll be another commemorative military cavalcade travelling Canada, only this time it'll be going west to east, from Edmonton (May 20) to Halifax (July 8). No, they're not going the wrong way. The Mounted Troop of Lord Strathcona's Horse is retracing the route it took to reach the boat for South Africa to fight in the Boer War a century ago.

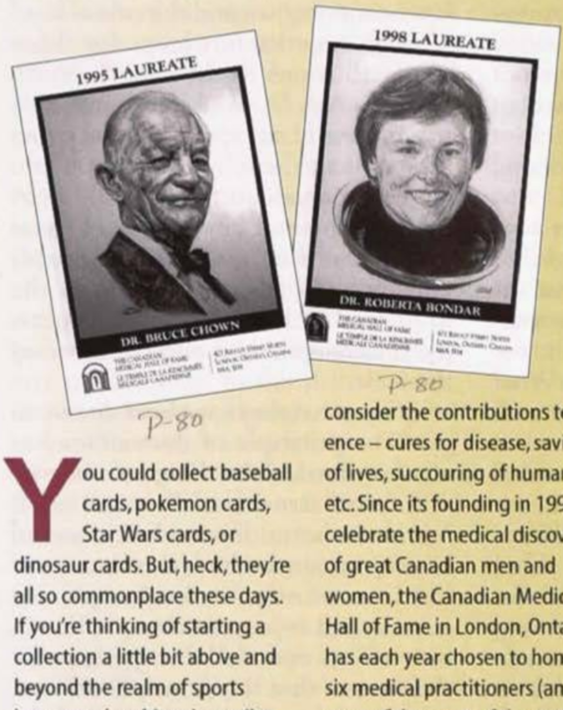
Donald Smith, Lord Strathcona, who drove the last spike of the CPR at Craigellachie, had one or two other involvements in a long and busy life – he was, besides a railroad financier, a fur-trader, a bank president, a member of parliament, and a diplomat. It was during his posting as high commissioner to the United Kingdom that he offered to raise from his own purse a Canadian contingent of over five hundred mounted riflemen to support Britain in its battle with the Boers. The Boers had introduced guerrilla tactics to the war, and Smith's response was to offer Canadian policemen, cowboys, and cattle ranchers from Manitoba, British Columbia, and the North-West Territories who could match the Boers in mounted skills. In April 1900, Strathcona's Horse, subsequently Lord Strathcona's Horse (Royal Canadians), arrived in South Africa to join other contingents from the British Empire, and help win the war for the British.

Embarkation 2000, as the centenary event is being billed, consists of visits to eleven Canadian cities and towns, west to east, where the troop will perform its musical ride, and participate in civic ceremonies and such. The raising of the regiment will be celebrated in other ways, too. In February, serving members of the regiment travelled to South Africa to unveil new headstones for the two soldiers who died in the Boer War. Next month the post office is issuing a stamp, and a statue of Lord Strathcona driving the famous last spike, a project initiated by the regiment, is scheduled to be raised on the grounds of the Alberta Legislature.

## Good daughters

Meanwhile, in other news with a Boer War commemoration link, the Imperial Order Daughters of the Empire celebrates its centenary this year. The sun has long since set on the British Empire, but the Daughters carry on nonetheless. In 1900, the order was formed to support Empire forces in South Africa, and while IODE was actively involved in both world wars supporting Canada's efforts on behalf of Britain and its allies, the encouragement of programs imperial has understandably waned. Today IODE's focus is largely on supporting children and families through a variety of initiatives and programs. To celebrate its 100th anniversary, for instance, IODE is establishing a capital fund to support an ongoing grant program open to individuals or groups specializing in developing and implementing ways to prevent child abuse and neglect. As in 1900, a contemporary response to a contemporary problem.

## News from the halls of fame




You could collect baseball cards, pokemon cards, Star Wars cards, or dinosaur cards. But, heck, they're all so commonplace these days. If you're thinking of starting a collection a little bit above and beyond the realm of sports heroes and prehistoric reptiles, you might consider, well, historic Canadian doctors. True, white-coated ladies and gentlemen sporting stethoscopes and waving tongue depressors may not have quite the pizzazz of certain collectible behemoths (football players or brontosauruses) but consider the contributions to science – cures for disease, saving of lives, succouring of humanity, etc. Since its founding in 1993 to celebrate the medical discoveries of great Canadian men and women, the Canadian Medical Hall of Fame in London, Ontario, has each year chosen to honour six medical practitioners (and most of them not of the stethoscope and tongue depressor variety, you'll pardon the cliché) and, among other things, put each visage on a 15 cm. by 10 cm. collect 'em-and-trade 'em-type card. Some doctors you would already know: Frederick Banting and Charles Best of insulin fame, Wilder Penfield of neurosurgery fame, Norman Bethune of battle-field-mobile-blood-bank fame, Bruce Chown of Rh-disease fame, Roberta Bondar of astronaut fame, and Tommy Douglas (though not a medical doctor) of father-of-medicare fame. Others would be less well known to the general public, but each in his or her own way has advanced medical science or the health of society. This May in London, six new inductees make their way into the Hall of Fame. They are (drum roll, please) David Sackett, founder of Canadian epidemiology in Canada; Jack Hirsch, international expert on anticoagulant therapy (which aids in reducing heart and stroke risk); John Evans, medical education innovator; Leonora King, first female Canadian doctor to practise in China; G. Malcolm Brown, medical research advocate; and Bernard Belleau, laboratory researcher (whose work has refined drugs to combat cancer, AIDS, and hepatitis B). Cards bearing their countenances are imminent.

PAUL ROMNEY

**Explorations**

# Was Canada Meant to be a Democracy?

Canadian law does not permit a province to secede unilaterally, even with the clearest mandate from the province's voters. That was the Supreme Court's conclusion in the *Quebec Secession Reference* of 1998. In reply to a federal government query, posed in the wake of the 1995 sovereignty referendum, the court decided that Quebec's secession would amount to an amendment of the Canadian constitution and would therefore require the agreement of Ottawa and the other provinces.

The Canadian constitution says nothing about a province's right to secede, so the court had to base its decision on the fundamental principles of the constitution. But this was not as easy as you might think. What are those principles? Since its amendment in 1982, the constitution has declared that "Canada is founded upon principles that recognize the supremacy of God and the rule of law." But it doesn't say outright what those principles are, though you can infer them from the Charter of Rights and Freedoms. That, though, is a modern document. Canada's original charter (the British North America Act, which some now call the Constitution Act, 1867) is even more reticent. It merely notes the desire of the colonies concerned to be "federally united ... with a constitution similar in principle to that of the United Kingdom."

Accordingly, the court based its decision on four unwritten constitutional principles, which it detected in the history of Canada and its founding. They were federalism, democracy, respect for minority rights, and, finally, "constitutionalism and the rule of law." Though unwritten, except for those vague allusions in the British North America Act, "it would be impossible to conceive of our constitutional structure without them."

**Macdonald told the Quebec Conference of 1864 ... "the rights of the minority ought to be protected, and the rich are always fewer in number than the poor."**

Few Canadians today would deny the fundamental importance of these principles. But are they as deeply entrenched in Canada's past as the Supreme Court says? In some respects the judges' opinion is surprising, to say the least.

Take what they say about democracy. "The principle of democracy has always informed the design of our constitutional structure," they tell us. It "can best be understood as a sort of baseline against which the framers of our Constitution, and subsequently, our elected representatives under it, have always operated. It is perhaps for this reason that the principle was not explicitly identified in the text of the Constitution Act, 1867 itself. To have done so might have appeared redundant, even silly, to the framers."

Well, there is no need for the Supreme Court or anyone else to speculate on the framers' failure to identify democracy as a fundamental principle. Leading founders had plenty to say about democracy, in the legislature and elsewhere, and it's clear that they simply didn't like it. It stood for everything that they abhorred about the United States and were trying to avoid in designing their own federation. As George-Étienne Cartier, the leading French-Canadian advocate of Confederation, put it, in the U.S. "the ruling power was the will of the mob, the rule of the populace." Universal suffrage had caused mob rule to supplant legitimate authority, resulting in anarchy and civil war. Cartier promised that Confederation would not repeat the American error. Its object was to perpetuate constitutional monarchy, and the British values it stood for, in North America.

John A. Macdonald dwelt on one virtue of the British system in particular: "In all countries the rights of the majority take care of themselves, but it is only in countries like England, enjoying constitutional liberty, and safe from the tyranny of a single despot or an unbridled democracy, that the rights of minorities are regarded." Richard John Cartwright, scion of a leading Loyalist family from Macdonald's hometown of Kingston, saw democracy as the chief peril to liberty in North America: "Our chiefest care must be to train the majority to respect the rights of the minority, to prevent the claims of the few from being trampled under foot by the caprice or pas-

sion of the many. For myself, sir, I own frankly that I prefer British liberty to American equality. I had rather uphold the majesty of the law than the majesty of Judge Lynch."

Fear of the majority inspired several features of the scheme of union. It was invoked to justify an appointed rather than an elected senate. It lay behind the various safeguards for minority languages and educational institutions – safeguards that, in the 1870s, were reproduced in the Manitoba Act and the North-West Territories Act. In a sense, it underlay Confederation itself. Macdonald could not deny French Canadians' concern to reestablish Lower Canada – their ancestral homeland – as an institutional bulwark against the growing anglophone majority. That was one reason why the British North American union had to be federal, with political authority divided between a central government and individual provinces, despite the discredit brought on federalism by the American Civil War. And (as Macdonald also noted) the Atlantic provinces, fearful of life as tiny minorities alongside the Canadian leviathan, also insisted on federal union, although Charles Tupper and some other leading Nova Scotians preferred a completely centralized union.

But when Macdonald and Cartwright extolled the virtues of "British" or "constitutional" liberty, they almost certainly had a different sort of minority in mind. As Macdonald told the Quebec Conference of 1864, which laid the basis of union, "the rights of the minority ought to be protected, and the rich are always fewer in number than the poor."

In the British tradition, *liberty* meant, first and foremost, freedom from arbitrary imprisonment or confiscation by the Crown. By the 1860s, though, the propertied classes controlled the state. They no longer feared the Crown but the people. In Britain itself, property was protected from the people by means of a strong executive, a hereditary House of Lords, and a voting system that disqualified "the poor." But the North American colonies had no hereditary aristocracy and a broader franchise. "British liberty" Canadian-style meant limiting the role of this broader electorate. It would elect representatives to the lower house of the legislature, but the upper house would be appointed by the Crown. There was no question of American-style referendum and recall, or of electing judges.

But fear of the majority did not mean that democracy had *no* place in the constitution. When British American politicians denounced it, they were usually speaking of it as a dominant principle, as in the United States. Macdonald juxtaposed "constitutional liberty" to *unbridled* democracy. Cartier condemned the U.S. system as one of *purely* democratic institutions marred by universal suffrage. A Lower Canadian legislator, Thomas Ryan, quoted a new book on representative government by the British radical thinker John Stuart Mill, who advised "that there should be in every polity a centre of resistance to the predominant power in the constitution – and in a democratic constitution, therefore, a nucleus of resistance to the democracy." That was why the upper house had to be appointed and not elected.

No British North American, however conservative, could deny democracy a place in the political order. True, universal suffrage was not the rule. Nova Scotia had universal male suffrage between 1854 and 1863, and Prince Edward Island also had it virtually, though not explicitly, but women were disqualified either by custom or by law, and there was normally a property qualification in the British style. In North America, though, the property qualification was much less exclusive than in Britain, because the distribution of wealth was much less uneven. Most small farmers had the vote, and many ordinary townspeople too. (Among voters in the Toronto election of 1836, the largest single occupational group was "labourer.")

The fact is that democracy didn't necessarily mean universal suffrage and certainly not female suffrage – women didn't normally vote in the United States either. Democracy means "rule by the people," and in mainly rural societies, like those of British North America in the 1860s, a system that enfranchised most farm owners and small businessmen was at least partly democratic, though admittedly it was a patriarchal sort of democracy.

Indeed, Reformers – self-styled friends of the people who had organized in reaction to Tory domination – tended to see universal suffrage as an antidemocratic institution, which diluted the power of the people. Rapid immigration was inundating British North America with newcomers, most of them impoverished and nearly all of them ignorant of the struggles by which the people of the various colonies were trying to assert their right to control colonial politics. To most Reformers, these newcomers were not part of "the people" – though British, they were aliens. Their poverty made them easily bribable by the embattled colonial elites (as in Britain, voting was done in public, not by secret ballot), and their ignorance rendered them susceptible to demagogic denunciations of the Reformers themselves as "disloyal." In Canada in the 1830s and 1840s, hyper-loyalist Irish Protestants organized in Orange lodges lustily opposed the campaign for Responsible Government. In Nova Scotia it was a Conservative government that introduced manhood suffrage and a Reform government that abolished it nine years later.

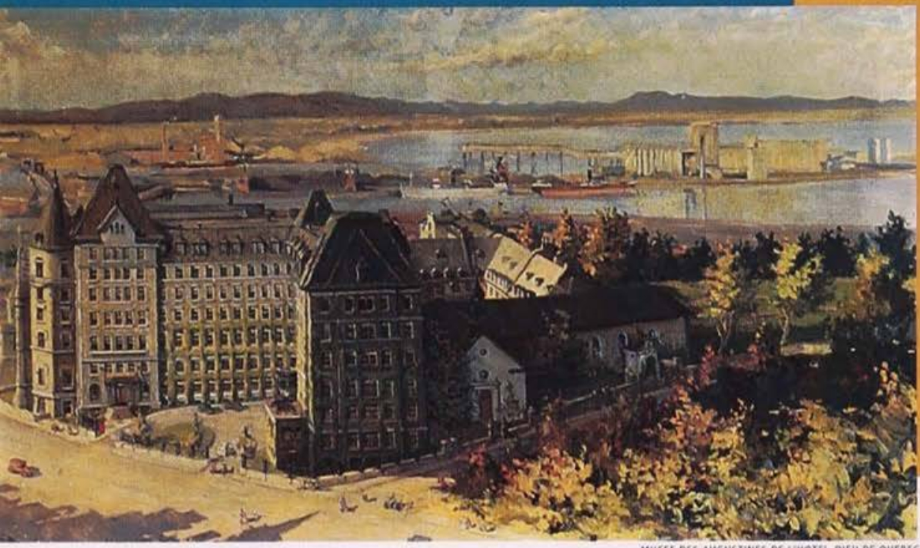
So democracy did not mean in 1860s everything it does today, but such as it was it had a place in British American politics, and Canada's founders undoubtedly expected it to have a place in the politics of the new Dominion. It was not, however, as the Supreme Court calls it, a principle that "informed the design of our constitutional structure." To men like Cartier and Macdonald, Cartwright and Ryan, in fact, it was not a principle at all. The informing principle was *representative government*, about which the founding charter had plenty to say. Democracy was merely a condition – a necessary condition of representative government in the egalitarian societies of North America. It was not a good but an unavoidable evil, and they did what they could to keep it in its place. ■

Paul Romney is author of *Getting It Wrong: How Canadians Forgot Their Past and Imperilled Confederation* (University of Toronto Press, 1999) and coeditor of *Canada's Founding Debates* (Stoddart, 1999).

*During its first half-century, in the wake of the Counter-Reformation that regenerated the Roman Catholic faith, New France witnessed an explosion of missionary zeal. Jesuit fathers came to proselytize to the Huron people. Ursuline nuns came to open a school for French and native girls. And Augustinian sisters came to found the first hospital, the Hôtel-Dieu, in Quebec City. War, pestilence, and fire were the constant enemies of these young hospitallers. But they persevered. Today the Hôtel-Dieu de Québec stands testimony to their faith and charity.*

# Sheets of a Pleasant Colour

by Louisa Blair



MUSÉE DES AUGUSTINES DE L'HÔTEL-DIEU DE QUÉBEC

In the summer of 1639 three young women arrived in Quebec City in a small rowboat, perched on a heap of salted codfish. They were there to start the first hospital in the Americas north of Mexico. On the beach to meet them were the governor of New France, the Jesuits, and a few other notables of a city whose population had not yet reached two hundred. The women were both nurses and nuns; they were still in their twenties, and they had come all the way from Dieppe, France.

The hospital they founded is still there 361 years later, with its high stone walls, its monastery, and its beautiful secret garden, and so is the community of Augustinian sisters. The last nun stopped working at the hospital four years ago, and the sisters ceded it to the province only five years ago.

In the lobby of this busy modern institution is a large mural of those three young women, full of enthusiasm, setting out from Dieppe for a new life worthy of their wildest dreams. The long sea crossing was gruelling, but the sisters were each provisioned with twenty bottles of "good wine," which must have helped, as well as smelling salts and a mattress. They kept up their morale by singing several church services a day below deck, in two-part harmony, and handing out rosaries to the sailors.

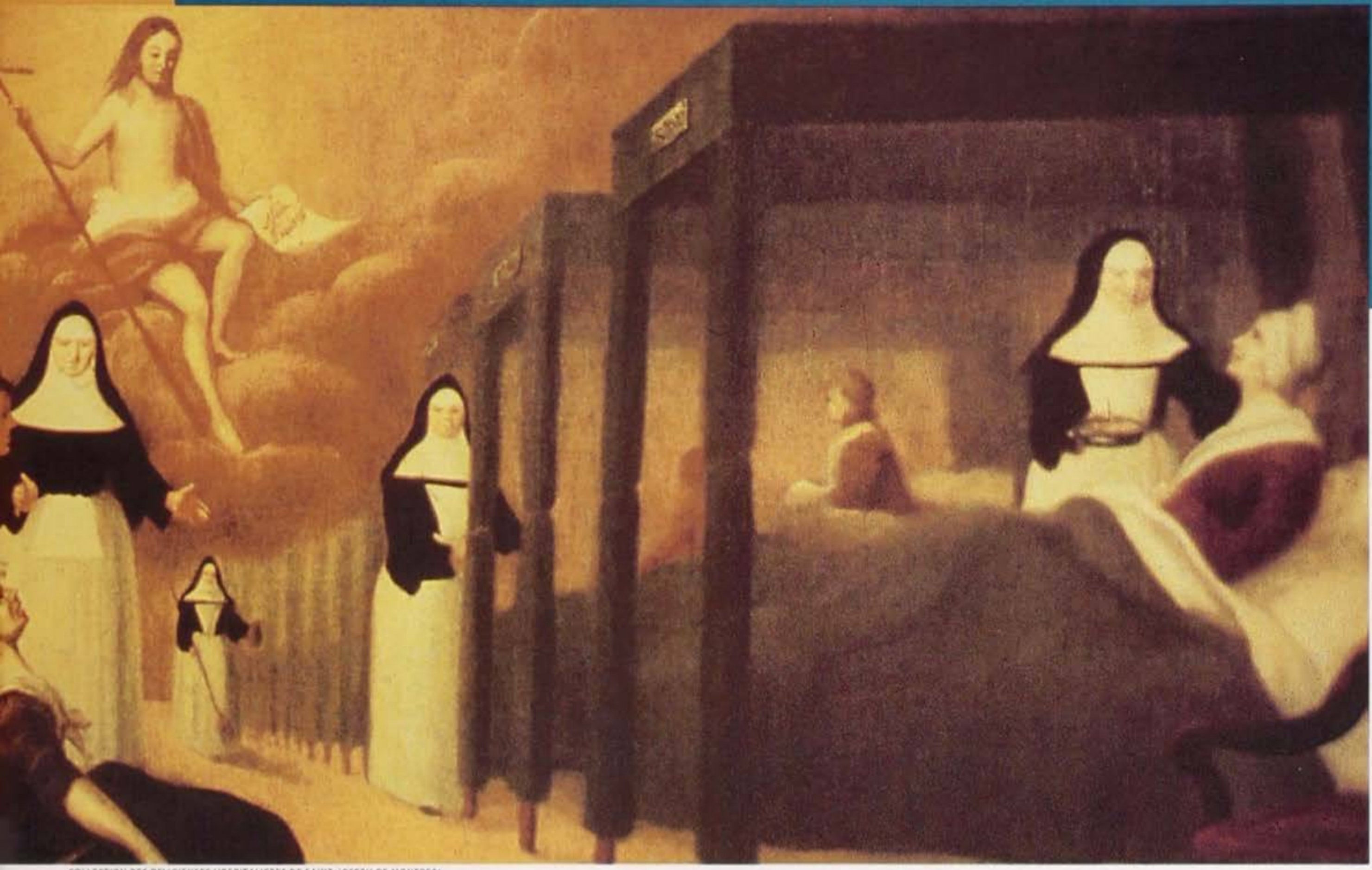
The women belonged to the *Congrégation des réligieuses hospitalières de la Miséricorde de Jésus*, a religious community based on the Rule of Saint Augustine that began in France in 1155, and had been running hospitals since the Middle Ages. By 1949 the order had opened nine more hôtels-dieu in Quebec.

Hôtels-dieu were the institutional expression of a spirituality that saw practical hospitality towards the poor and the sick as the best way to know divine love. In addition to their vows of poverty, chastity, and obedience, these sisters took extra vows of hospitality towards the poor who were ill.

It was through the very bodies of the poor that they were to serve Christ, "collecting the drops of the precious blood of Jesus Christ and, in their daily tasks, applying them for the salvation of the souls for whom it was shed."

Their mission in this case was to help and convert the First Nations, for whom, as the Jesuit Father Le Jeune reported back from New France, to be the least bit ill was to have one foot already in the grave.

Left: *L'Hôtel-Dieu de Quebec*, by Francesco Iacurto, 1938. In 1639, three Augustinian sisters arrived in Quebec City and established the first hospital in the Americas north of Mexico City. A year later they opened a second hospital at Sillery, but by 1644, harried by Iroquois raids, they moved to the Hôtel-Dieu's present site on Quebec's rue de Palais. The foundation of this building still exists. The oldest section of today's Hôtel-Dieu de Québec dates from 1696. Below: *De la salle des femmes de l'Hôtel-Dieu de Montreal.*



COLLECTION DES RELIGIEUSES HOSPITALIERES DE SAINT-JOSEPH DE MONTREAL

The Algonquins might respond very well, he reasoned, to a hospital where they would be cared for and emerge alive. Since he himself had rewritten the rule book of the Augustinian order a couple of years before, he was in a good position to know that the sisters would do a good job. Their hospital in Dieppe was, in his view, "one of the best-run in Europe."

But in Quebec the nuns found themselves on what might as well have been a different planet. There was wilderness, war, fire, starvation, cold to a degree they had never imagined, and epidemics of mysterious and terrifying diseases. They were immediately faced with a smallpox epidemic that wiped out half the Huron Nation. From the description of the nineteenth-century historian Francis Parkman, we can gather a little of what their first days were like:

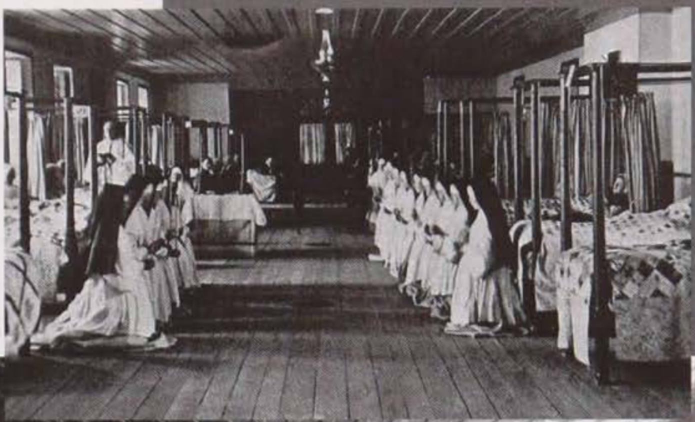
> *In the infected air of their miserable hovels, where sick and dying savages covered the floor, and were packed one above another in berths – amid all that is most distressing and most revolting, with little food and less sleep, these women passed the rough beginning of their new life.*

The sisters literally gave the shirts off their own backs. They used up their entire supply of sheets to bandage their patients, and resorted to tearing strips off their own habits and wimples.

By 1644, the Iroquois wars made their second hospital, which was slightly upriver in Sillery, too dangerous to inhabit. But the sisters didn't give up. They took Algonquian lessons in between tending the sick and lending a hand with the hammering and the planing for their third hospital. The fourth was a stone building they were given in 1658, with a ten-bed ward and a chapel. This is the one whose foundations are still there today, next to the Budget car rental and just up the road from McDonald's.

Unfortunately for their plans for winning the confidence of the First Nations, their hospital quickly became known among the Algonquins as "the house of death," thanks to the waves of epidemics that were ravaging them, and soon none came there any more.

The sisters were kept more than busy, however, with the illnesses of the sailors, soldiers, and settlers, who died like flies almost every time a boat docked in the harbour carrying the next epidemic.



The mission of the sisters was to restore souls as well as bodies. Masses were said on the wards; devotional paintings were frequently changed; and each bed was dedicated to a particular saint. Medically, the hospital was progressive for its day. Long before germ theory, the nuns maintained high standards of cleanliness, disposed of waste quickly, and – a novelty for the seventeenth century – provided each patient with his or her own bed. Shown clockwise, from left: meal time at the Hôtel-Dieu de Québec, circa 1877, and the sisters praying for the sick or injured.

PHOTOS COURTESY LES AUGUSTINES DE LA MISERICORDE DE JESUS

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The sisters knew that New France was a challenge, but that's what they wanted. They were infected with a mystical fervour, inspired partly by theologian Vincent de Paul, that was sweeping through French society in reaction to the Protestant Reformation. In the twenty years following the sisters' arrival, hundreds of priests and sisters were propelled across the sea from France by some mystical vision of a saint calling them to the New World. By 1642 the city had five major religious communities on fire to serve the First Nations, whom they considered the very poorest of God's poor. If it meant martyrdom so much the better. At one point the French communities were so keen to send sisters that the Quebec contingent had to write and threaten that any more sisters who showed up would be put on the next boat home.

There was also money to be had, as French aristocratic patrons were inspired by the passionate letters home written by the Jesuits and Marie de l'Incarnation, an Ursuline nun who arrived in Quebec to educate French and native girls the same year as the first Augustinian sisters. The letters are still some of the most important documents in Canadian history.

The money for Hôtel-Dieu came from the Duchesse d'Aiguillon, niece of one of the wiliest politicians in the history of France, Cardinal Richelieu. Widowed at eighteen, she was filled with the mystical fervour of the era, but being also an eminently practical woman, she set up a foundation for the new hospital by investing in several trucking companies (or their seventeenth-century equivalent), whose revenue was to support the hospital.

The only payment the Duchesse exacted was that the sisters were to pray for her, and have the sick pray for her, daily, in perpetuity. (The sisters are still praying for her, 361 years later, but they no longer require their patients to do so.) Her patience must have worn somewhat thin, prayers in perpetuity notwithstanding, since the nuns had abandoned their first two hospitals within a few years of arriving and had asked the Duchesse to fund each remake. When they asked her to fund an expansion of the third, she raised 10,000 livres, but the ship carrying the money to New France sank in mid-Atlantic. The Duchesse never laid eyes on any of her hospitals, as she never set foot in the country.

Medical care was evolving quickly in Europe, for

the first time in about fourteen hundred years. (Galen, the Greek anatomist whose theories formed the basis of European medicine until the Renaissance, died in 200 A.D.) The discovery of William Harvey, for example, that blood circulates rather than ebbs and flows, had only been published in 1628. But the discoveries of the Renaissance had only limited relevance in New France. Doctors had to adapt, deal with things they'd never seen before, and depend on local aboriginal knowledge.

In any case, hospitals weren't medical places anyway. It wasn't until two hundred and fifty years later that Hôtel-Dieu hired its first intern (and, incidentally, acquired its first washing machine). Until then the doctor dropped in once a day to diagnose and prescribe, and if he couldn't make it, he'd send his son. It was in 1885 that a doctor first suggested that the sisters install a telephone, so that they could call him if an emergency arose.

Until that same year there was no operating room in the hospital. Operations were performed in the patient's bed or on a table in the middle of the ward, which must have made for some interesting and messy spectating.

It was the nurses who sheltered, washed, fed, and comforted the patients. They were also the administrators and the apothecaries who made medication out of the herbs they grew in their walled garden. Some medications they imported from France, but some Canadian remedies were becoming fashionable in France, and for a while Canada had the distinction of being an exporter of medicines in the form of ginseng, maidenhair fern, and beaver kidneys, the latter considered unrivalled in the treatment of madness. The hospital's apothecary was no small enterprise: when the hospital burned down in 1755, forty thousand livres worth of medicine was lost.

The constitution, revised in 1666, made every detail of hospital life very clear. The patients were to be treated with great respect and tenderness. The nuns were never to exhibit any squeamishness or discouragement, and were always to show themselves delighted to be serving the patients, so that they could read on the nuns' faces "the joy and the pleasure they take in serving Jesus Christ in the persons of the poor."

Men and women were to be kept strictly segregated, and the constitution itself demanded that the doors between them be kept locked. In times of war or epidemics, however, even this rule was stretched, and men were cheek by jowl with women. Even in times of peace, one might find officers lounging around in the wards gossiping, or some woodsmen, arriving back with an armful of the logs that were used to heat the hospital (250 cords per year!), relaxing by the ward's huge woodstove to warm up again for the next load, and smoking their pipes.

Sisters kept order in the wards, and patients weren't allowed to sing, gamble, or read inappropriate books.

Each patient had a little wooden bedside table with an enamel teapot on it for tisanes. What's more – and this was an innovation – no bed was to hold more than one patient. Curtains around the beds were changed on Ash Wednesday and All Saints Day. The sheets were to be made of good quality material and, the rules specified, should be of a pleasant colour.

The highly ceremonial mealtime ritual had come over from France with the founders, and remained unchanged until the 1930s. The food was the best in the city, such that people began to fake illness so they could come and eat there. A menu for 1744 lists the following daily requirements:

1 ½ lbs bread (part in soup)
12 oz of meat or fish
fruit
vegetable
wine
a shot of spirits (only on prescription)

Much of this, except the fish and wild game, was raised by the sisters themselves. Outside the city they had their own farmland to supply the hospital's needs, including an entire island in the St. Lawrence River. The buildings of the hospital complex included a bakery, a morgue, a chapel, a butcher, a laundry, and a chicken coop. Clearly such juxtapositions raised no eyebrows in the seventeenth century.

The sisters not only enclosed their new hospital and monastery within a high stone wall, but deliberately situated it on a promontory overlooking the St. Charles Estuary, so that the wind would blow away the pestilential smells of the young city.

These smells can only be imagined by the number of city ordinances that were passed in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries regarding, for example, not allowing pigs to roam the streets, insisting that corpses and dead animals be carted out of town, that garbage be disposed of, and that open drains (in effect, the sewers) be of a certain depth and covered with planks. Such ordinances were passed so often that one senses they were not taken very seriously, and disease proliferated.

The medical history of Quebec City consists of a litany of epidemics. The sisters lurched from crisis to crisis, and some of them succumbed themselves. As early as 1685 they had to put up extra tents in the courtyard to shelter all the victims of one epidemic, most likely smallpox. In 1702–3, smallpox carried off a quarter of the city's population. And in 1740, Mère Ste-Helene wrote that during a yellow fever epidemic that year, "the wards, the garrets, and outer parlours were all filled, and we can hardly pass between the beds. All became as black as negroes as soon as they were dead."

In spite of the fact that Pasteur was not yet even a microscopic glimmer in his mother's eye, the sisters' standards of cleanliness were high, and they were

MUSÉE DES AUGUSTINES

The constitution of the Augustinian order enjoined the sisters to treat a patient as if he were Christ himself. Despite the primitive conditions under which they worked and the ravaged condition of many of the patients, the nuns were to exhibit neither distaste nor despair in their work. Rather, they were to confront each patient with joy and pleasure.

required to "keep the place very clean, burn incense sometimes, and dispose of waste as quickly as possible." This concern for cleanliness was perhaps why, in spite of the epidemics, the hospital became known as a place where one could reasonably hope to stay alive. Annual mortality was only 10 percent.

The sisters also found their dedication to the poor highly relevant in Quebec. In 1664 they decided to set aside half the assets and revenue of the community for the care of the poor, including providing food, medicine, and even rent. The Iroquois wars, poor harvests, a decline in the fur trade, and the epidemics were taking their toll. The population of the city by 1676 was already 1,200, but a third of those were officially classified as destitute.

The colonial government regularly ordained money especially for the poor, specifying the "*pauvres malades*" (the sick who were poor) and "*enfants trouvés*" (abandoned children) – the earliest form of public welfare in Canada.

Soon the Duchesse suggested that ships' captains begin to contribute toward the care of their sailors, and the king of France offered to take some responsibility. By 1744, 27 percent of the hospital's revenue was from the state, to pay for the king's soldiers, sailors, prisoners of war, militias, and even shipyard workers. The king's officers had long had a special ward of their own, and the sisters didn't mind this favoritism so much, as the revenue helped them subsidize caring for the poor. But when the bishop in 1719 demanded the priests have their own quarters, too, at the hospital's expense, Soeur Marie-Andrée Duplessis de Sainte-Hélène complained in writing that this amounted to "Christ's ministers taking the sustenance from the members of his body." But they went along with it anyway.

The vocation of the sisters was as much to restore souls as bodies – a sort of retreat house crossed with a hospital. Even the architecture reflected this. Masses, held frequently in the wards, could be attended without even sitting up in bed. Hanging over the altar at the end of the ward was a devotional painting, which was changed regularly so that patients wouldn't get complacent.

Each bed, instead of being identified numerically, was dedicated to a particular saint, whose name was carved in the wooden bedstead and into whose care the occupant was commended. This practice was only changed at the end of the nineteenth century. Prayers were said loudly and distinctly before the altar twice a day. And another tradition that might take patients today by surprise: the nuns washed each person's feet on admission to the hospital. They considered their vocation as a cross between that of Mary, the contemplative in the Gospel of Luke who sat at Jesus' feet so as not to miss a thing that he said, and her sister Martha, the practical one who made sure Jesus got a decent meal.

This concern for the souls of their non-Catholic patients, whether they were First Nations heathens or Protestant heretics, took the form of trying to convert them and thereby save them from the fires of hell. But when their patients were obstinate, the sisters' creativity did not stop at care, prayer, and proselytizing: When one sailor refused to convert in 1665, a sister dropped the ground-up bones of one of the Jesuit martyrs into his herbal tea when he wasn't looking. The sailor was miraculously converted, made a public confession of faith, and was discharged from the hospital "perfectly cured." After the British conquest in 1759, the new bosses frowned upon this evangelical aspect of their mission, but the nuns carried on anyway.

The concern for the patient in his or her entirety, body and soul, threatened to disappear as the nineteenth century progressed and the medical sciences began to dominate hospital care. But the nuns never let this concern go, and as hospital archivist François Rousseau observed, it's one thing that has never changed about Hôtel-Dieu. Now they call it "attention to the client's biopsychosocial contextual reality."

The nuns lived in a society that was full of tumult. In addition to epidemics, fires were an ever-present threat. The entire hospital burned down four times in its first 115 years. Debt so engulfed them that in 1762 they had to sell all their cutlery and take in other people's laundry and mending. The cold of winter was absurdly cruel, and war was a constant menace. This wasn't France, it was the wild north.

But inside the walls, prayers were said four times a day, the wards were decorated with special care on feast days, and modesty of the eyes was practised with the male patients. The sisters kept patiently cultivating their onions and turnips. In their relentless and centuries-old struggle for order, peace, and goodness, they carried on baking the bread, feeding the chickens, and weeding the medicinal herb garden.

Louisa Blair is a freelance writer and translator who lives in Quebec City.

Alexander Graham Bell's film biography set in *Boston*? Brantford, Ontario – birthplace of the telephone – won't stand for it! What happens when small-town right meets Hollywood might.

# Phone Flick *Flailed!*

by Gary Muir

Alexander Graham Bell (below, left) making the first New York to Chicago telephone call in 1892. Though Bell affirmed he invented the telephone in Brantford, he actively promoted its commercial development in the U.S. Of course Hollywood's spin on history (below, right) is always, well, very *Hollywood. The Story of Alexander Graham Bell* is less the tale of a clever young man who invents a useful device than it is of a struggling young man (Don Ameche) who falls in love with a deaf girl (Loretta Young) who tells him bravely to put off thoughts of marriage until he gets that telephone thing of his invented. With the help of his plucky assistant Watson (Henry Fonda) he does. Bell and belle marry. Bell becomes rich. But a rival company sets out to ruin him. He fights back. He triumphs. The music swells. The End. Don Ameche, who played the role of Bell, became so identified with the role that school kids of the day were said to answer "Don Ameche" when asked to name the inventor of the telephone. For a time, too, when the telephone rang, people would say, "Answer the Ameche." The film also memorialized the line that Bell uttered from another room when he needed Watson: "Mr. Watson! Come here. I want you." However, in the end, the film was unsuccessful in alerting American audiences to the Canadian birthplace of the telephone.

Whenever anyone says the words *Boston* and *telephone* in the same breath, people from Brantford, Ontario begin to twitch, a reaction caused by that American city's continued temerity to declare itself the birthplace of the telephone. It is an assertion that any loyal Brantfordite will deny, and has denied since the telephonic device swam into the human ken back in 1874 or 1876 – depending on whom you care to listen to.

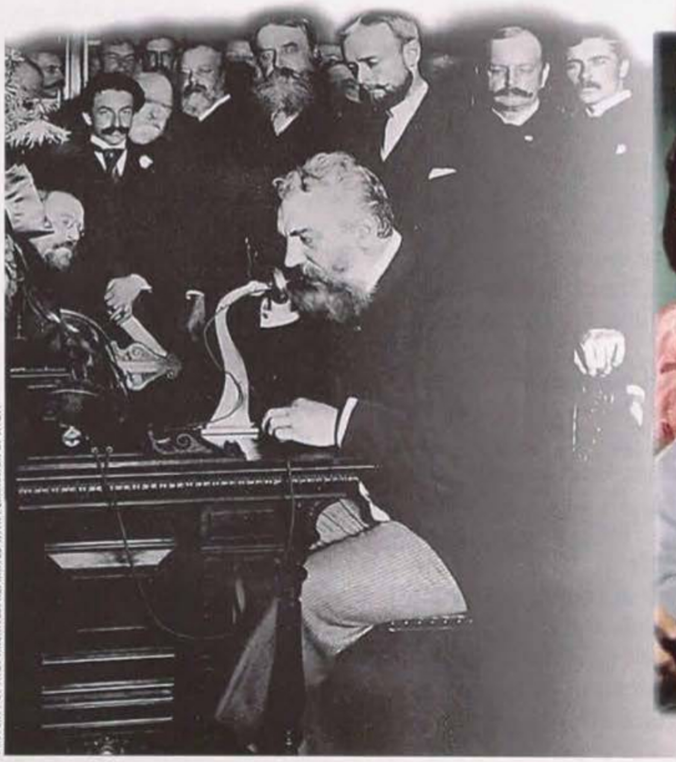
For its part, Brantford has always hung on the words of the man himself, affirmations that were delivered on a variety of occasions when Alexander Graham Bell was pressed to assert the city's right to term itself "The Telephone City."

Two examples will suffice. At a Brantford Board of Trade dinner in Bell's honour on March 9, 1906, the inventor stated: "The inception of the telephone was here," and at the official unveiling of the Bell Memorial on October 24, 1917 he affirmed: "I have looked very carefully over the history of the telephone with the object of seeing just what had been done in Brantford and what had been done in Boston, and I am prepared to state that Brantford is right in claiming the invention of the telephone here."

These confessions, and their ilk, have been all Brantford has needed to motivate it to take on any and all comers, Boston in particular, whenever the "where was the telephone invented?" question is put on the table.

Of all the defences Brantford has mounted over the years connected to this issue, the one that gained it the most press and aroused the most prolonged public furor was an event in 1939 that connected Brantford, the telephone, Hollywood, and Darryl F. Zanuck. It was an affair that eventually involved local and provincial politicians, the Ontario Censor Board, and newspapers across Canada.

On January 5, 1938, Brantford's mayor, R.J. Waterous learned that Hollywood columnist Jimmy Fidler had announced that Twentieth



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Century Fox was intending to produce a movie about the life of Alexander Graham Bell, and that it would include scenes shot in Boston.

Leaping into action, Waterous sent a wire to producer Harry Brand, in which he made his pitch for Brantford, pointed out the treasury of Bell memorabilia that was present in Bell's former home, and offered to "furnish full details on request."

At the same time he contacted the head office of Bell Canada in Montreal, asking for assistance in assuring that Brantford would receive credit in the movie as being the birthplace of the telephone. Bell Canada replied that it would pursue the matter with their American affiliate and would "have the American Company urge the claims of Brantford."

On Bell Canada's advice, Waterous wrote to each of Graham Bell's daughters and urged them that "in the event that the film company approaches you in the matter, that you bring to the attention of the producers the fact that your father conceived the idea of the telephone and carried out many of his early experiments here."

On January 16, Waterous received a telegram from Kenneth MacGowan, the man in charge of the picture. When MacGowan pointed out that although considerable research had already been carried out, he would "greatly value additional historical data," the mayor wasted no time replying with a lengthy letter and with pamphlets that supported Brantford's claim.

In a January 19 editorial, *The Brantford Expositor* congratulated the mayor on his initiative and urged him to continue to "advance Brantford's interest in the matter" as patrons of the movie would have a right to expect a "reasonable adherence to the facts." The mayor's office did just that, sending out an almost continuous stream of literature concerning Brantford's claim.

The initial response to his lobbying was an indication from MacGowan that the producers were willing to make the necessary script revisions and to include some shots of Brantford and the Bell homestead.

The stage then was set for Brantford to go Hollywood.

Or was it?

During 1938 Brantfordites eagerly followed press releases on the film, learning that Don Ameche and not Tyrone Power would play Bell and that Loretta Young had been cast as Bell's future wife Mabel Hubbard and Henry Fonda as Bell's assistant, Watson.

But what a shock awaited the good people of Brantford when *The Story of Alexander Graham Bell* was released in the spring of 1939 and contained only one very brief reference to the city and not one word about Brantford and the Bell connection.

In reporting the matter on April 4, *The Expositor* began: "The Hollywood film version of the life of Alexander Graham Bell has been produced and by all accounts it is much more Hollywood than Bell, and certainly more Hollywood than history." A further editorial on April 6 elevated the dispute to the status of an international incident by remarking that the producer's refusal to recognize Brantford was "a selfish denial of the 'good neighbor' policy exploited by President Franklin Roosevelt himself."

Action followed hard on the heels of words. On April 10, in a strongly worded resolution, Brantford's city council called on the Ontario Censor Board to ban the film unless the part of the invention of the telephone was "carried out in its proper sequence and the city of Brantford given its place in the story."

On April 12, the Brantford Assembly of the Native Sons of Canada protested the inaccuracy of the film and called for a Dominion-wide boycott until "such inaccuracy has been corrected."

At yet a higher level, Brantford's MPP, Louis Hagey, brought the matter to the attention of the Ontario legislature and premier Mitchell Hepburn.

Newspapers across the country chimed in. The *Halifax Herald* harrumphed: "The people of all Canada will back the people of Brantford in this demand – because there is all too much loose 'history' getting into the records these days." A *Globe and Mail* editorial termed the issue "a strange business" and opined that the matter was "too important a subject internationally to be twisted to the glory of the United States."

As a result of the continual pressure, on April 18, just prior to its first showing in the province, the Ontario Censor Board ordered a temporary suspension of the film pending an investigation of the matter.

For their part, the producers, in a classic example of doublespeak, were claiming that the movie was "not inaccurate, but only incomplete."

On April 20, Hagey and a delegation from Brantford attended a private viewing of the movie. They were not impressed. The showing justified the reports that the movie made no connection between the telephone and the city of Brantford.

The pressure obviously got to Twentieth Century Fox. On April 27, they cancelled all bookings in Canada. They agreed to shoot some scenes in Brantford and, subject to the approval of the Bell family, "to endeavor to correctly interpret Brantford's phase of association with the invention of the telephone."

On May 13, a select group of Brantford civic officials viewed a presentation of the revised movie. What they saw involved no script rewrites but the addition of a prologue, which the producers agreed would be included in all Canadian screenings of the film. This prologue contained two pictures of the Bell Memorial, two shots of the Bell homestead, and the scroll at the homestead with a statement from Bell's son that the invention of the telephone took place at his father's home in 1874.

The changes did not exactly put Brantford on the North American movie map, but the city's pride was mollified and Canadians were now allowed to experience, as the publicity releases stated, "the dramatic romance of one who dreamed and struggled, loved and achieved" in a motion picture that "pays homage to Bell's genius and a woman's devotion."

Gary Muir is a freelance writer who writes a weekly heritage column for *The Brantford Expositor* and is currently working on *A City's Century – Brantford in the 20th Century*.

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# Ghost Town: Remembe

**It's nothing new in the Canadian experience. Boom economy – are born, and are just as quickly abandoned. traditions and alter an ancient landscape, there is**

Deserted streets, abandoned pits and tailing ponds, and a deeply scarred landscape are the eerie artifacts of a small, once-thriving mining community.

ALL PHOTOS YOLANDA WIERSMA

# ring Pine Point

by John Sandlos and Yolanda Wiersma

**towns—an outgrowth of our resource-based But when the remains of industry threaten local much at stake. And much to be learned.**

T'samba K'é. A place name. A name on a map. To find it you drive directly north from Edmonton through mile after mile of cattle country. Five hours of steady driving will bring you to the forestry and farming centre of Peace River; five more to the resource hub (oil and gas, mining, forestry) of High Level. Here, trailer parks dot the landscape and reflect the newness of the place. Ask around, and you may find out that many of these trailers came from Pine Point, a community in the Northwest Territories. Pine Point is also the English word for T'samba K'é.

The townsite is still marked on many road maps of the Northwest Territories. It sits east of Hay River along Highway 5, a remote road that winds through one hundred kilometres of spruce forest near the south shore of Great Slave Lake. There are, however, no signs leading you to the community. There is a radio tower that is visible from the road, some piles of rubble that spend much of the year covered by snow, and a few unmarked roads leading away from the highway. To the casual observer in an automobile, it is difficult to find much evidence of a town. Nonetheless, the town of Pine Point is the place where we are going.

"Slow down! That's where the cop shop used to be," jokes Barry Sanderson, a former resident of Pine Point who now lives in the nearby Chipewyan and Métis community of Fort Resolution. He guides us off the highway and down one of the unmarked roads. "Look out for the kids near the school yard!"

We park in the empty parking lot between the still-visible yellow lines in the middle of "town." Cliff Cardinal, another former resident, points out where a bank, grocery store, drug store, hotel, and bar were located on both sides of the square. When asked how many people lived and worked here, he replies, "too many," as if abstract numbers could not capture specific memories of the past. Later, we are shown the site of a former golf course, ball diamond, arena, and even a farm, all signs of a once thriving and prosperous community.

Today the town is empty. There are no houses, shops, schools, restaurants, banks, churches, and other centres of community life. There are only empty streets and sidewalks. Gravel driveways lead to grassy meadows; a school crosswalk leads to nowhere. A few weedy plants have begun to poke through the concrete, but the landscape looks remarkably like a suburb without the buildings.

To get an idea of who lived here and why, you must go a little further down the main road and toward Great Slave Lake. Here, the landscape gives way to an astonishing industrial vista. At the end of the road, near an abandoned fuel-storage tank, begins a massive flat moonscape of white rubble and rock that stretches all the way to the shores of the lake. To the northeast, there is water seeping over the rock in all directions. Large numbers of spruce trees at the edge of the wet area are withered and dead. Piles of rubble surround the flat land on three of the four sides (Sanderson points out one that was used as a ski hill by Pine Point residents). Climb to the top of one of these human-made hills, and the story of Pine Point becomes even more clear. Huge open pits dot the landscape for several kilometres in either direction—fourteen can be seen from a high point near the highway—but published reports say that as many as thirty exist in the region. Close inspection of one pit reveals a net-

work of roads leading to the bottom; a stunning emerald lake sits there now, ironically reminiscent of the tourist site of Lake Louise in Banff National Park, Alberta. An abandoned rail bed leads the eye westward toward Hay River and the southern link with the transcontinental routes running east and west through Edmonton. Rather than being tied to the local landscape, as the local native communities have been for generations, the community that once existed here was clearly focused on a single resource, with primary ties to the industrial south. But, like so many of Canada's one-industry towns, Pine Point has become a ghost town.

Opened in 1964 by Pine Point Mines Ltd., a subsidiary of Cominco, the lead-zinc mine at Pine Point was soon shipping a thousand tons of high-grade ore per day. The primary destination of the ore shipments was the Cominco smelter at Trail, British Columbia, but by 1965 ore was also being shipped to smelters in Japan and the United States. An ore crushing and separating facility was soon built, and production was interrupted only briefly in the first six months of 1983 due to depressed commodity prices. The townsite that was built near the mine had a population of nearly two thousand people at its height. It contained, in addition to the structures identified by Sanderson and Cardinal, trailers and houses, a swimming pool, RCMP post, gas station, variety store, bunkhouse for single miners, and an airstrip (with daily flights to Edmonton). In short, every amenity of mainstream Canadian society and culture was imported here by the largely nonnative transient work force when the instant community of Pine Point was established.

By 1988 it was all over. In late 1985, only two days before Christmas, Cominco officials announced that, due to dwindling ore reserves and a drop in the price of lead and zinc, the mine would run flat out while a termination fund and layoff plan for mine employees was created. In January 1987, the company announced an impending closure of the mine. The town residents left gradually – in January 1988, the company was advertising executive houses in *News North* for only $6,000, but in February there were still enough children for the mites hockey team to sweep a local tournament. By July 1988, only one hundred residents remained, and on September 1, 1988, the town was officially closed. Many of the miners relocated to the Hemlo goldfields in Ontario or to mines in Tumbler Ridge, British Columbia. During the last months of the town's life, banners were hung on the local highway sign that read, MAKE AN OFFER, and LAST ONE TO LEAVE, SHUT OUT THE LIGHTS.

Ghost towns are not an uncommon feature in the Canadian landscape. Northrop Frye observed in a 1976 CBC television special that "Canada is full of ghost towns; visible ruins unparalleled in Europe." Whether it is a former coal-mining town in the Alberta badlands, a closed mill town in Ontario's north, or a declining outport fishing village in Newfoundland, all carry the telltale signs of boarded-up houses and empty streets that mark an abandoned landscape. In this respect, the story of Pine Point is one example of the hit-and-run staples economy that has

**One can hardly imagine two adjacent communities harbouring more**

characterized much of Canada's history. Fifty years ago, Harold Innis outlined the significance for hinterland areas of productive "shifts" in Canada's largely resource-based economy:

> Concentration on the production of staples for export to more highly industrialized areas in Europe and later in the United States had broad implications for the Canadian economic, political and social structure. Each staple in turn left its stamp, and the shift to new staples invariably produced periods of crises in which adjustments in the old structure were painfully made and a new pattern created in relation to the new staple.

For those miners who came to the North from the "outside," moving on after a mine expired was, though difficult, simply part of the bargain made as a worker in the Canadian boom-and-bust resource economy. For many Pine Point workers, there were other mines to which one could move and start again. In a 1983 address, R.P. Douglas, a senior vice president of Cominco, summarized the accepted transient lifestyle of a Pine Point miner:

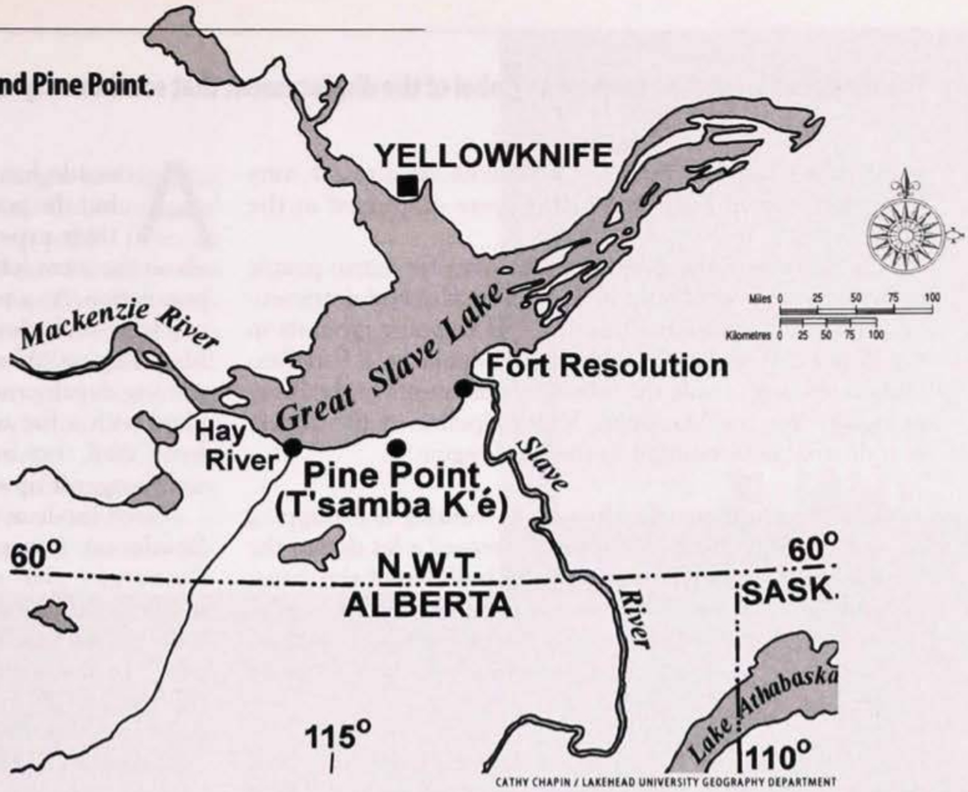
> It is interesting to talk to people about Pine Point and ask their views about the community. They all recognize that it cannot be made into a retirement centre. There are no secondary industries, no logging, gas or oil. There is no government. As a tourist destination it would not rate one gas pump. ... As a result they feel that, when the mine runs out of ore, the community will shut down and cease to exist.

Yet, for the native population of the nearby Métis and Chipewyan (Dene) community of Fort Resolution, the ghost town means something entirely different: complete displacement from a landscape they have inhabited since time immemorial. Indeed, one can hardly imagine two adjacent communities harbouring more conflicting ideals than those of Fort Resolution and Pine Point. Fort Resolution is one of the oldest and longest standing permanent settlements in the Northwest Territories; Pine Point was one of the newest and, as it turns out, one of the least permanent settlements in the region. To many people living in Fort Resolution, the South Slave region had been a homeland for generations; the Pine Point work force lived under the omnipresent threat of expulsion from the landscape. At the time of the mine's establishment, the largely native town of Fort Resolution was isolated, connected to the outside world only by Slave River barges, a tenuous winter road, and infrequent flights

**conflicting ideals than those of Fort Resolution and Pine Point.**

in and out of the community. Pine Point, populated by transient southerners, was, from the beginning, connected to the highway system leading south. Pine Point's economy was based wholly on exports to the outside world; the economy of Fort Resolution was largely local and based on the land. Although the fur trade had connected the Dene to global markets for decades, it was an economic activity that was easily incorporated into a subsistence way of life. A large-scale open-pit mine, on the other hand, was a land-use pattern that threatened traditional ways of living off the land.

Why then was a community such as Pine Point established that so clearly did not fit the local culture and economy of the South Slave region? What brought this community of outsiders to the northern landscape? Certainly the postwar development policy played a key role. Faced with the prospect of a global collapse in fur prices, federal government policy in the Canadian North during the 1950s proceeded on the assumption that the traditional trapping and hunting economy was dying. The government felt that native people in the North had no choice but to accept the southern ways of wage employment and industrial development. As Justice Thomas Berger observed with respect to industrial development policies in the North, "southerners are once again insisting that a particular mode of life is the one and only way to social, economic, and even moral well-being." Indeed, officials in the Diefenbaker government, which had embarked on a "Roads to Resources" program throughout much of the Canadian hinterland, promised that the Pine Point mine would be an engine of development for the North in general and a source of employment for local people in the South Slave region. A 1956 report on the economic




CATHY CHAPIN / LAKEHEAD UNIVERSITY GEOGRAPHY DEPARTMENT

prospects of a railway linking the as-yet-undeveloped Pine Point area to the transcontinental lines, concluded that "this pattern of economic development appears to the Department of Northern Affairs to be *the only one that offers any hope* of creating a substantial number of new permanent employment positions for natives" [italics added]. So convinced was the government of the wisdom of the new development policy that they provided $99.7 million in capital investments to cover the large portion of costs associated with the construction of the project, including the Great Slave Lake railroad, the Talston River hydro project, and the highway development between Hay River and Pine Point.

Sadly, the local economic and employment benefits promised by the federal government did not materialize for the people of Fort Resolution. The highway extension from Fort Resolution to Pine Point was delayed until 1972, eight years after the opening of the mine, so workers from Fort Resolution could not commute to the mine. Those who did move to Pine Point experienced long periods of separation from family and community. There was no native employment policy when the mine opened, nor was there initially a housing policy to

**The shattered landscape became a symbol of the displacement that southern-style, large-scale industrial development can often im**

assist native families moving to the area. As a result, very few people from Fort Resolution were employed at the mine.

Not only were there few opportunities for native people in the new wage economy, but the mine also had detrimental impact on traditional hunting and trapping grounds in the Pine Point region. In 1977, Mike Beaulieau, a Fort Resolution resident, made the following comments to the Berger inquiry into the Mackenzie Valley pipeline on the impact of industrial development in the local region:

> We, the Dene people, do a lot of hunting and trapping and fishing. Our hunting has decreased a lot due to the construction of the highway, the building of the mine, and the increase of the people from the South. ... Our traditional grounds are slowly being overtaken by these [mine] employees. There is virtually no benefit to be spoken of from the mine.

Contrary to the federal government predictions (and despite lost hunting and trapping opportunities in the Pine Point region), the traditional hunting and trapping economy did not disappear in Fort Resolution. There are still many hunters and trappers who derive at least some portion of their income and diet from traditional subsistence activities. Most people still prefer the taste of "country food" and community hunts are frequent. Food from these hunts is often shared among community members, reaffirming the links people have with each other and with the land.

By contrast, the shattered landscape of the Pine Point area became a symbol of the displacement from the land that southern-style, large-scale industrial development can often impose on a local population. Indeed, Cominco's vague promises to clean up the area after the closure of the mine were never fulfilled. The open pits left behind by the mine were never rehabilitated. Local residents and the South Slave Regional Council (SSRC) wanted all forty-three pits filled in, but the mine balked at the eleven-dollar-a-metre cost of gravel. The flat moonscape of rubble and rock created to cover the tailings pond was never resoiled and shows little sign of growth and recovery. The rubble has blocked off the once fish-laden Paulette Creek, reducing it to a mere trickle, and there are ongoing fears that seepage from the tailings may continue to flow into Great Slave Lake.

A *News North* article from 1988, the year that the mine closed, pointed to the tailings pond as a chief concern for residents of Fort Resolution. Lloyd Cardinal, a member of the local advisory committee worried that, "if they do a second-rate job [on the clean-up of the tailings pond] and 25 years from now ... it breaks up the environment and affects humans we're the one [*sic*] who will suffer." Showing an almost prophetic skepticism, Robert Sayine, chief of Fort Resolution at the time, is quoted as saying, "I know for a fact it [the mine area] probably to be impossible to return to its natural state."

A decade has passed since the closure of Pine Point, but the people of Fort Resolution have not forgotten their experience of the mine. A certain bitterness about the mess left at Pine Point still lingers among the local population. As a result, there is a cautious attitude towards any large-scale development projects proposed for the South Slave Region. When asked whether he would support future mining development near Fort Resolution, Sanderson replied with a flat no. Cardinal, however, was more ambivalent: "Well, they buggered up the land already, they might as well bugger it up some more."

Such fatalism may represent a minority opinion in Fort Resolution. A recent public meeting concerning Highwood Resources' plan to develop a test beryllium mine in the northeast corner of Great Slave Lake drew a hostile response from the community. The testimony of local residents began in the early evening and continued until three o'clock in the morning. The public comments included everything from descriptions of wildlife movements in the proposed mine area to evidence of high rates of cancer near Utah's beryllium mines (which presenters had downloaded from the Internet). Resident after resident – hunters, trappers, young mothers, elders, and local government officials – stood up to express their opposition to the project, doubtful that there were significant benefits to be gained from proposed mine. At one point during the meeting, an exasperated official with Highwood Resources assured local people that they had nothing to fear because the new mine "wouldn't be another Pine Point."

Another Pine Point – words that reverberate across the past thirty-five years of northern history. Words that address future uncertainties. Indeed, the recent diamond-mine developments north of Great Slave Lake are, for those who remember, an eerie reminder of the Pine Point mine. The Ekati mine, owned jointly by Broken Hill Propriety Co. Ltd. (BHP), of Australia, and Dia Met Minerals Ltd., became the first operational diamond mine in Canada early in 1999. Just thirty-five kilometres to the southeast the Diavik operation at Lac deGras, which is owned by RTZ Corp. of London and Vancouver-based Aber Resources Ltd., is scheduled to open by mid-2002. Both projects have met with intense scrutiny from local native people. There are serious concerns about the impacts of diking and draining large sections of major lakes such as Lac de Gras, as well as the lasting impacts of the proposed open-pit mines. Dene at the public hearings for the environmental review panel of BHP expressed serious concerns as to how the mine would affect the land, the fish, and the Bathurst caribou that migrate through the area. They also questioned how the mine would alter their lifestyles. Many felt that the benefit of increased employment did not outweigh the costs of a shattered landscape.

The Diavik mine has escaped the intensive panel review process to which the Ekati mine was subject. Instead, the

**pose on a local population.**

impacts of the mine are being assessed using a less rigorous comprehensive study under the Canadian Environmental Assessment Act, a process that requires no public hearings to be organized by the federal government. Business and industry leaders in the North laud the comprehensive study as a more streamlined process, while environmentalists express serious doubt that their concerns will be addressed.

Some things have changed in the thirty years since Pine Point. Diavik has tried to ease concerns by promising to hire a majority of northern and aboriginal workers, purchasing northern goods and services whenever possible, sponsoring job-training programs and scholarships for young people in local communities, and committing money to the develop-

ment of local businesses and environmental research. Although the mine will be abandoned after only sixteen to twenty years of operation, Diavik has promised that water will be slowly released into the open pits and the area fully restored to "productive fish habitat."

Despite such promises, no one can predict what the future holds for the Dene living in the area around the Diavik and Ekati mines. The new mines may, unlike those in the past, offer local opportunities for wage employment while at the same time respecting traditional values and lifestyles. Perhaps the mining companies can even mitigate the ecological impact of draining lakes and creating huge open pit mines. All of this may be possible. But standing within the shattered landscape and reflecting on the broken promises of the Pine Point mine, one cannot help wondering if lessons have been learned from the past, or if history has a tendency to repeat itself. ■

Yolanda Wiersma and John Sandlos are former residents of Fort Resolution. John is currently engaged in doctoral work in Canadian environmental history at York University, Toronto. Yolanda is an M Sc. candidate working on the ecology of protected areas at the University of Guelph.

The authors wish to thank Clifford Cardinal, Frank Fabien, Barry Sanderson, and Freda Elief of Fort Resolution for supplying information on Pine Point. Special thanks also to Ken Latour for his assistance with photographic equipment.

ALL PHOTOS YOLANDA WIERSMA

John Sandlos (above, left) is dwarfed by an immense open pit left behind after the Pine Point mine was abandoned.

Empty streets, sidewalks, and hydro wires with no power source (above) are all that is left to mark the townsite of Pine Point, Northwest Territories.

# Letters *from* Sea

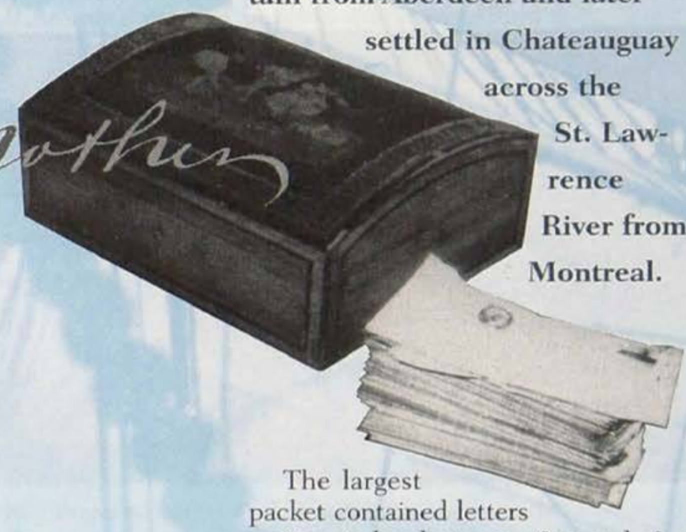
*Dear Mother*

Jane Abercrombie Fullerton, Alexander's mother, and the recipient of most of his correspondence from sea, late in life.

ROBIN FARR

by Robin Farr

**This story begins with a cache of letters found carefully preserved in a small wooden casket—letters written over a hundred years ago to an indomitable lady, born the natural daughter of a man of substantial means, who in 1839 eloped with a Scottish sea captain from Aberdeen and later settled in Chateauguay across the St. Lawrence River from Montreal.**



The largest packet contained letters written to her between 1839 and 1871 by her dominie, her teacher in Scotland, which kept her in touch with events in the small corner of the Highlands she had left behind. But inside the box was another, smaller packet of letters written by her son, Alexander Fullerton, who had followed his father to sea. Though they cover only a few years in the mid-1800s, the letters provide a remarkable portrait both of Alexander and of life at sea in that era. Through his writing we glimpse a sensitive and resourceful young man determined to make his way in the harsh world of the great sailing ships, which, though on the threshold of being transformed by steam, were not much changed from the time of Nelson. They still embarked on long voyages to distant ports, still provided few amenities within their cramped quarters, and were still ruled by captains with absolute authority.

Undoubtedly Alexander, who was sixteen when his family arrived in

Canada, already knew something about the seaman's life because his father was a sailor. He had taken Alexander's mother away from the Highlands to the small, workaday port of Stonehaven on Scotland's east coast, then south to Sunderland, England, where he became master of larger sailing ships, before moving his growing family to Quebec in 1860. While his wife established a farm in the Chateauguay valley, he made nearby Lachine his home port.

No picture of the young Alexander survives, but from his letters we can draw our own. In them, we are introduced to a young man who has received a good education for the period. His writing is crisp and expressive. But it is the inner character that we come to know most clearly. He evinces a sensitivity that even the harsh world at sea cannot subdue, an intelligence that promises to carry him far, and a determination to rise in life above his seaman's station. We also sense his devotion to his family. It was because of this bond that his mother so carefully preserved his letters.

Work opportunities were not plentiful for a young man from a Scottish immigrant family in the early 1860s. Alexander's four younger brothers remained at home to help their mother with the farm tasks while his father was away on the high seas for long periods of time. Alexander undoubtedly was required to provide some additional income for the family left behind. When we first meet him, he is working on a farm in Lower Lachine across the St. Lawrence River from his family's farm and near the wharves where his father docks his ship. He tells his mother that it is "dreadful lonely, there is a great difference between here and home. Since there is nobody to mend for you, I am going to start the needle." It is a skill that will serve him well in his life at sea.

ROBIN FARR

Alexander Fullerton Sr., the Aberdeen, Scotland sea captain, who eloped with Alexander Jr.'s mother Jane. Alex wrote that he once thought his father "hard," but his experience at sea under a fiercer disciplinarian softened his view.

What concerns him most is not having his violin, which his father was to have left at the wharf. But Alexander arrived too late to meet his father and returned to the farm disappointed. It's a remarkable instrument for a farm lad and future deckhand to enjoy, and it provides him in the rough years ahead with his greatest pleasure. In the meantime, however, life on the farm is not pleasant. "We are at the old tune again," he writes, "no butter. It is very handy for you to know a month before what you are going to dine on." His wit and good spirits will tide him over many difficult days at sea.

He is not sure whether or not he will stay on the farm. The farmer is obviously mean and parsimonious. "The bos[s]," he writes, "is up to his trade for I find that the clock is half an hour fast so I have to turn out a little after 4 o'clock." He also wants his mother to remember him to his "lady friends for I haven't seen a lady's face since I came here." But farm life is nearing an end for him. He is about to follow his father to sea.

***Quebec City, June 1864*** Alexander is in Quebec City loading lumber onto his father's ship, but earning insufficient money to afford him a trip to Chateauguay to see his mother. He signs on as a hand on the ship *Lanarkshire* to make the voyage to Liverpool. Six weeks later, he writes to his mother from Leith in his native Scotland. The voyage across the Atlantic has left him badly shaken.

*One man in the ship kept us all in hot water, except myself for I never had a harsh word said to me all the passage but the poor men caught it. Our Captain was a quiet man, too quiet in fact. The mates were an ignorant lot. But our boatswain, an Irish Yankee beat the very devil, as the Canadians say, for the very night [he] came aboard there were enacted scenes I hope never to behold again. There was hardly one in the crew not disfigured in some way.*

*One man was stabbed in the head five times with a dagger. He was laid up three weeks, nobody expecting he would live. Men were lying in all directions, moaning and groaning, the deck blood from bow to stern and all by the boatswain. Whatever possessed the officers to let him go, I will never comprehend. He had brass knuckles on and used them and no mistake. If ever I wished myself at home it was that night.*

*I was sick, but if he had used me after that fashion I would have blown his brains out. There was never a day but he knocked someone down with a capstan bar or a belaying pin. He would send two or three over the side with a rope around them to scrub the sides and when they were at ease, let them drop into the broad Atlantic at the risk of being drowned. I pitied them but a greater parcel of cowards I have never seen to let one man tyrannise them that way. We got to port at last and the police were informed of the whole performance and he made himself scarce. However, the good wages healed many wounds. I cleared 11 pounds, 10 shillings and 4 pence for my share.*

He sums up his thoughts about life at sea in a vivid description of the seaman's life under sail:

*I think twice as much of home now I am away from it. I hope [my brothers] are content at home for they had better keep away from the sea. I know what it is now. You have not a moment you can call your own. Four hours on deck and four below and your meals are taken when you go below. Such meals … a pig would refuse. Then you have to live among a parcel of vagabonds, both dirty and lousy. Then the officers, you may get good ones, but for one good you will get twenty bad and a bad officer makes the men's lives miserable for there is no other law on board ship. [An officer] is prophet, priest and king. And you have to do your mending and washing when you want to fall asleep.*

Ship "Tornado"
Bombay June 4th 1865

Dear Jane

We arrived here all safe on the last day of May after a rather long passage and at a very bad season for freights for there is nothing offering at all so we dont know where our next place of destination is. I am very glad to hear of John's getting a new Boat she must be a fine one if I may judge by her size. I see there are a great many changes in Durham who would think of Alexr Sadler getting married. you make me laugh about Polly & Annie I promised them every thing they wanted without the least intention of performing any of them as you see how it stands. I suppose it's no use referring to Mother or Mag letter for I have no doubt that I have them off by heart for I know I could not keep your prying eyes out of them (for in fact you told me as much

Liverpool 22nd Novr 1864

Dear Mother

I received your very welcome letter a few days ago and was very glad to hear you were all well. I learn by it that Mr Mills has got more money than man. you talk about having wet weather if you were here you would see wet weather for it rains constantly also that you are getting the redoubtable John Hays beside you. He will be praising you up to the handle for you were always a favorite with John. It is a pity that your grain is so short but if the turnout is good you need not care. I suppose Father is home long before this for the Steamer is here again I am very much obliged to him for being the means of getting into Captn Beards for they treat me as one of themselves especially Mrs B who sends her respects to you. I am getting a Guinea per week and board myself which does not cost me much for they

LETTERS COURTESY ROBIN FARR

In addition to his mother, Alexander also corresponded with his older sister, Jane, who, like her mother, married a sea captain and settled in Sunderland, England.

Even so, Alexander's determination to succeed at sea is as strong as ever: "Before I started I studied all those things and determined to try for the top of the ladder. If I ever thought I would never get beyond a common jack I would quit this moment. If I don't get to the top, it won't be for want of trying." His sense of humour shows through when he advises his mother to encourage his brothers to learn French. "You should let them sleep with a French Canadian girl now and then, it would improve their pronunciation wonderfully." He has seen many young ladies on his travels but, perhaps because of homesickness, his opinion is "our Canadian girls are far before them."

***Liverpool, November 1864*** By this time, he has signed on the ship *Tornado*, docked in Liverpool, and captained by a friend of his father's with the picturesque name of Captain Beard. His father arranged his service with Beard and he tells his mother he is very obliged to his father for doing so. Common to the period, the captain's wife is also onboard and, he writes, "they treat me as one of themselves." His wage is a guinea a week, although he pays for his own board (probably while at dock) and he generally takes some of his meals with the Beards. Otherwise "I just buy some bread and butter and live like a fighting cock."

He also reassures his mother, "you need not be afraid of me getting into bad company for I never leave the ship and I have no desire for more company than my fiddle and books." With a sense of wit he adds, "In fact I am quite a model sailor, neither drink, smoke nor swear. When I am dressed up nobody thinks I am a common sailor, they all think that I am a mate. At a warehouse the other day the owner told me that I was more like a gentleman's son than a sailor so I told him that I was a gentleman's son."

Knowing he'll soon be leaving Liverpool, he looks anxiously for another letter from home, and ends his own with a comment that shows the farm is never far from his mind: "I notice that all the horses here have a piece of leather between the shoe and the hoof on account of the stoney roads. It might help Charlie if you have not got him sold yet." After sending this letter Alex sails with the Beards to Bombay.

***Bombay, June 1865*** It was a "long passage," he writes home after arrival in Bombay, and he mentions the uncertainties of maritime trade. "It is a very bad year for freights for there is nothing offering at all so we don't know where our next destination is." At least the voyage was favoured with good weather and "we got around the Cape famously." He reports that he "likes the ship first rate, also the officers for I am almost dreaded as much as they on account of my intimacy with the Captain." However, his opinion of the Beards has altered considerably:

> *When we were in Liverpool, I worked for them as I would not work for my own father, day and night, Sunday as well as Saturday and lived on the simplest fare. And for what? I am fed up with promises, not one of which came true. First he was to rate me Able Seaman but when it came to the point, he could not afford it. Next he was to teach me navigation and I heard nothing of that. But no matter I have learned most of that myself from the officers so I am independent so far. They are the very essence of meanness, leading a regular cat and dog life. They quarrel every day, then they bring me in and if I side with one, I offend the other. They have had three adopted sons, myself being the third. The first two getting their walking tickets for some imaginary fault so I suppose my turn will come next.*

There is no relief for Alex, even when he escapes the ship. "I was ashore this morning but was only at the market. It is very dirty and dreadful hot here at present." It also seems obvious to Alexander that Beard is now abusing his friendship with his father. "Only yesterday he wanted to know if I would go another voyage at the same wages as this time. I have got my eyes opened." This is a hard period for a young man so far from home and family, yet Alexander is determined to advance.

***It is a dreadful long time since I heard from you . . . just think, the letter I received from you here was written in February before we were well clear of England and now this is October.***

He is now becoming a hardened sailor, yet with a sense of ironic detachment.

> *It just wants two days of being a year since I left home … I wonder how many more years will pass before I have the pleasure of seeing you all again. I may see you before the expiration of my four years servitude but in the midst of life we are in death as we had an instance the day we came in here. There was a fine young fellow, near my own age and the son of a gentleman near Liverpool and I was sent over the side to bring some plugs in and not being able to do it myself, I called to him to come and help me. The poor fellow came and handing the plugs to me, I jumped down on deck after which hearing a splash I sprang on the railing again and there was the poor fellow just under the stern. I sung out 'man overboard' as hard as I could and the helm was put down directly. We threw a lifebuoy to him but he made no attempt to reach it but sunk immediately without a cry. A great contrast with another accident that happened in the Indian Ocean. The Master was dipping the cat overboard in a net when the net opened and out popped puss. Such a kick-up you never saw. The yards were backed and a boat lowered, I was one of the crew. We were about half an*

*hour and were unable to see her because of the sea breaking. When finally spotted she was unconscious but soon came round. It was a near case for us too for the boat was so leaky that she filled and we had to pull for our lives.*

***Bombay, October 1865*** When we encounter Alex again, he has endured a stormy crossing in the China Sea, where a seaman was swept overboard, and now he endures a special indignity. Captain Beard decides to visit other ships in the harbour and details Alexander as one of the crew to row him and his wife in the unrelenting heat. While the Beards enjoy their visits, the little crew spends the day sitting baking in the rowboat.

***I am getting to be an old man, I pass here for about 19 and when I come to sign articles, I will sign for that age. I am going for Able Seaman for I find that I know as much as some that have been at sea all their life.***

Alexander often encounters his father's ship in distant ports, an indication of the regularity of the trade routes followed by cargo vessels at the period. "Father's ship has arrived here. She is finely fitted up and she is the largest vessel in Bombay though there are over a hundred of them." He asks his mother to "excuse the bad penmanship for it is no joke with the sweat pouring off." As ever, he looks for mail from home. "It is a dreadful long time since I heard from you ... just think, the letter I received from you here was written in February before we were well clear of England and now this is October."

***Christmas 1865*** There are two long voyages to India and China that year, but by Christmas Day, Alexander has returned to England and writes to his mother from Birkenhead, where Beard's ship is loading in preparation for another voyage to Bombay and China. He hopes that the family at home is enjoying Christmas "a little better than I have enjoyed mine as we have been shifting the ship all day." But he has had a piece of good fortune. "A gentleman came on board and asked for Mr. Alexander Fullerton and, as I was the person he addressed, I informed him at once that I was the person who answered to that title. He introduced himself as Captain Corriveau of the 'Benefactress' a friend of father's and he asked me to come to Mrs. Craven's for tea. [Referring to a boarding house in Seacombe frequented by his father and other captains when berthed in Liverpool.] I am glad that I have found some place to visit for I am tired of being cooped up in the ship."

But Beard always intrudes, even into the more pleasant episodes of Alexander's shipboard life. "Captain Beard is such a strict customer ... whenever I go ashore he turns out in the morning to send for me and subjects me to a severe cross-examination about my whereabouts the previous night. If I go to the theatre or concert I durst not tell him for he reckons it an unpardonable sin to spend a copper in that line. However, if he performs all that he promises I will be put through my paces in great style. He introduced me to the owners and they promised to do all they could for me. So if I can mind what I am about, I may be something more than a common jack some day."

Advancement is seldom out of Alex's mind. "I am getting to be an old man, I pass here for about 19 and when I come to sign articles, I will sign for that age. I am going for Able Seaman for I find that I know as much as some that have been at sea all their life. I try to learn and I am not afraid to inquire." He concludes this letter on a wistful note. "How I would like to be with you at New Years and the fun you will be having. But God knows when I will see you. Not for 4 years ... for I dursn't go back until I am something better than when I started for I am determined to reach the top of the ladder or perish in the attempt." He tells his mother, "give my love to father and tell him that once I thought him hard but since I have seen Captain Beard my opinion has changed altogether."

In a similar vein Alexander writes to his sister, Jane, who is also a sea captain's wife, living still in Sunderland: "I have spent a most rascally Christmas for the Bos wanted one of the ports caulked so we had to move

the ship away from the quay." He also tells her of the pleasures of Mrs. Craven's boarding house where he goes for tea. "There is three strapping girls there but they make no impression on this chicken." Captain Beard is still a problem for him, but young Alex does not lack for ingenuity.

> *I am afraid the 'Tornado' will get too hot to hold me I am kept in so tight. I can't leave the ship without being questioned. The Captain is always reckoning how much money I have earned and how much I have put in the bank. I don't see that it is any of his business. He made me buy an Epitome* [likely a reference to the *Epitome of Copernican Astronomy* by Johannes Kepler]. *The Captain says he has a quadrant for me but I have to pay for it. Last night I wanted to go ashore but I was ordered to bring the violin aft and play for the Captain and his wife. I took off one of the strings of the fiddle.*

Finally, before leaving on this voyage, Alex writes to his mother "a last letter for a long time for we signed articles yesterday, 2 pounds 10 per month on route for the Indies," and closes with thoughts for his family in Chateauguay. "I will bring you something nice from the Indies. I must say farewell for a long time and may God protect you all is my earnest prayer."

***Liverpool, January 1866*** The ship *Tornado* is windbound in the river at Liverpool for three days in a gale "that shows no sign of moderating." Beard has given Alexander a letter from his father but "he had the impudence to read it and tell me that there were some words he could not make out, but he has no scruples for he opens the mate's as well." At the boarding house the girls have given him "a spice loaf and some books just as if I was one of their family. I will make them some return for their kindness someday."

It was a promise Alexander was never to keep.

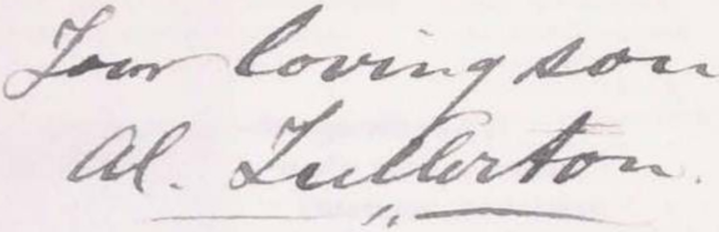
***Seacombe, June 1866*** Alexander writes to his mother from Seacombe to tell her that he is coming home. "For mother, dear, I may as well tell the truth, I am no longer able to work. The doctor here tells me that my liver is affected and then having the scurvy thanks to Captain Beard's poverty stricken ship and getting such a working-up in the channel, I am just about used up. However, a summer at home with you as my doctor will set me all-square again. Indeed, I hope so for my spirits will be a good deal lighter … for I was never so depressed until coming from Bombay having no word from home and with bad health." But by now we have come to know Alexander's strength of character: "I kept my legs with an effort, in fact I was so weak I thought that I was going off the hooks … I don't like to be croaking so to any person's enquiries after my health so I always say I am first rate, it saves time and talk."

"I am about to embark in the greatest tub I ever came across, square at both ends," he writes in seaman's lingo. "She will take about six weeks on the passage I judge by the cut of her." However, "that is nothing, never say die while there is a shot in the locker." He ends his letter with his usual closing: "From your loving and affectionate son. Alexander Fullerton."

After this Alexander's voice is stilled forever. We don't know how long the passage took, but we know he finally reached Quebec. That summer of 1866, he went out sailing on the St. Lawrence River with a young friend. The weather turned suddenly, and he and his companion drowned. After surviving so many storms in distant oceans, he perished in a storm at home.

Situated on a gentle slope above the Chateauguay River, almost swallowed now by the suburban sprawl of Chateauguay, is the old Protestant cemetery containing Alexander Fullerton's grave. It is very hard to find. The stone marker is small and the years have so worn the inscription that it is barely possible now to even read his name. ▣

***I will bring you something nice from the Indies. I must say farewell for a long time and may God protect you all is my earnest prayer.***




**Alexander Fullerton's gravestone at the old Protestant cemetery in Chateauguay, Quebec. No picture of him survives.**

ROBIN FARR

Now retired, Robin Farr is a founding director of McGill University Press (now McGill-Queen's University Press) and a former director of publishing of The Ryerson Press. He and his daughter, Wendy McLeod, who is a descendant of Alexander's mother, Jane Abercrombie Fullerton, have compiled and annotated a collection of over fifty letters written between 1839 and 1871 to Jane by her teacher in the Highlands of Scotland. *Letters from the Glen* is scheduled for publication later this year by the North East Scotland Family History Society, 164 King Street, Aberdeen, Scotland, AB24 5BD.

WELLINGTON COUNTY MUSEUM AND ARCHIVES / 6563

**It was the age of Edison, a time when passionate amateurs could concoct the most wondrous contraptions and change the world. The light bulb, the telephone, the internal-combustion engine – all poured forth from outdoor sheds and attic laboratories. John Connon was just such a nineteenth-century exemplar. One day he found his camera couldn't capture the glory of Elora, Ontario. So he set out to make a camera that would. And he did. The first true panoramic camera is Connon's invention.**

**It's a little-known Canadian first.**

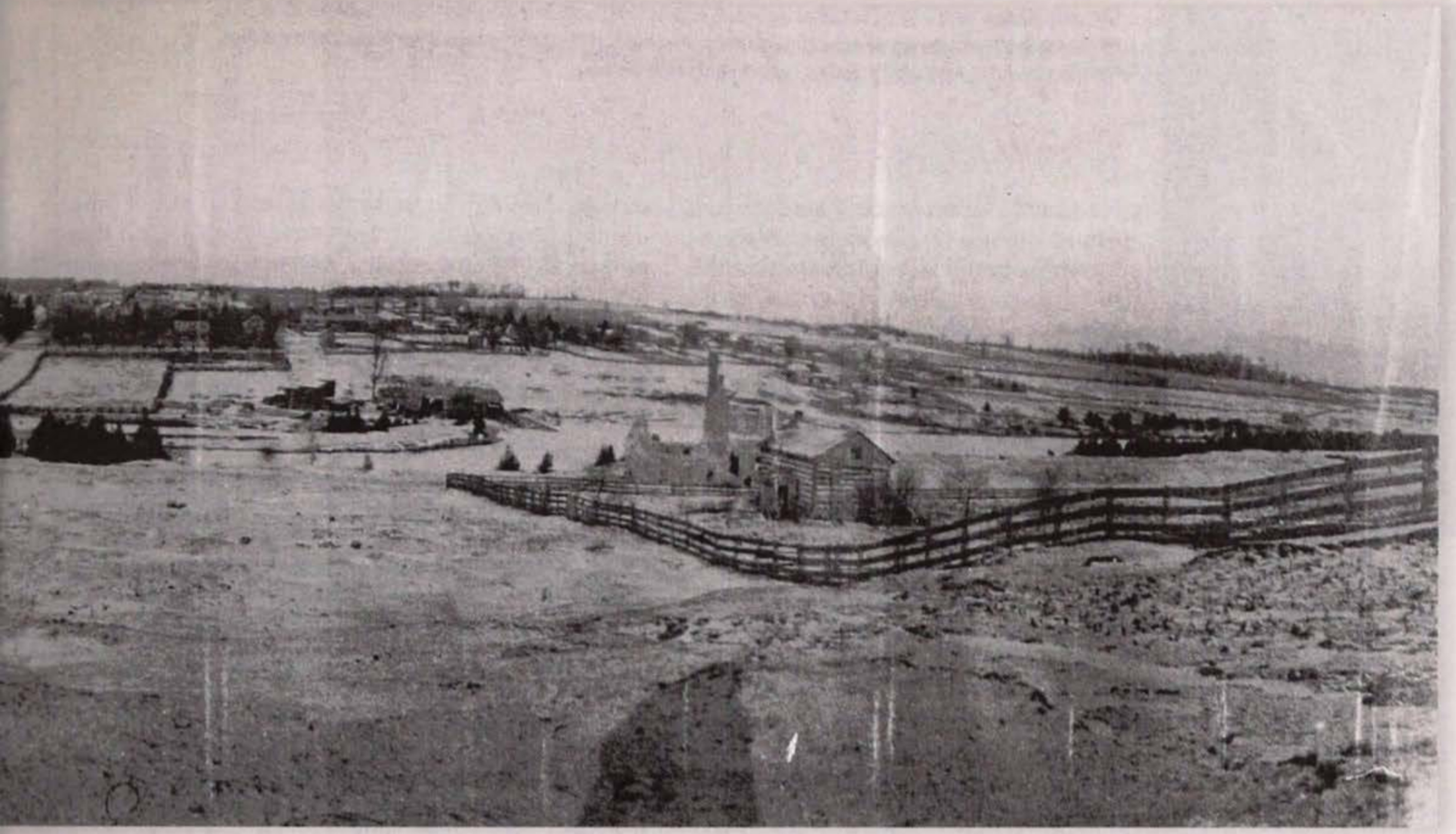
# In the Round

☞ by Charles Long

In the summer of 1886, John Connon was a young photographer in Elora, Ontario, a small mill town astride the picturesque Grand River. Frustrated that his regular camera couldn't take in all of Elora, the twenty-four-year-old began to tinker with an idea for a camera that could capture a 360° view in one long exposure. Tinkering was nothing new for Connon. Nor was he the first to try to expand the camera's field of view.

He was photographer Thomas Connon's son and had been given his own corner of the family darkroom at the age of twelve. He used his father's stereoscopic camera from the time he was old enough to carry it. At nineteen he suggested improvements to the senior Connon's design for a roll-film camera. At twenty he invented his own inside-the-lens shutter.

The elements of photography were hardly new. Leonardo da Vinci had described *camera obscura*, the phenomenon of light entering a darkened room through a small hole and projecting an inverted image on the opposite wall. And sixteenth-century alchemists knew that light reacted with certain chemicals to create an image on a surface. The problem was that nobody knew how to fix that image so that it didn't disappear as soon as the darkroom door was opened. Both James



Panoramic view of Elora, Ontario, taken from the south side of the Grand River in winter.

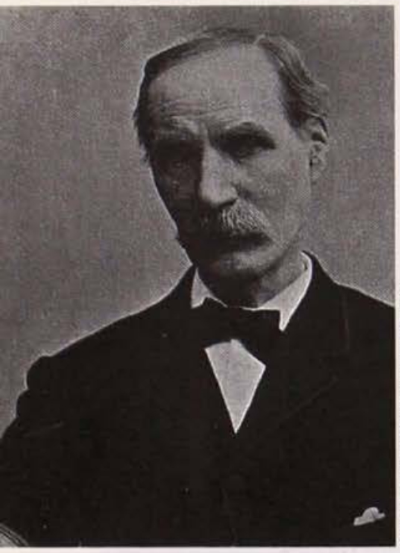
Watt (steam) and Thomas Wedgwood (china) had tried to solve the problem and failed.

It wasn't until January 1839 that Louis Daguerre, in France, and William Talbot, in England, announced independent successes. Daguerre used a polished silver surface treated with iodine vapour, exposed it, developed the image with vapour of heated mercury, and then fixed the image with a salt solution. Talbot used a sensitized paper negative, which he exposed and then developed in gallic acid and silver nitrate before making a contact print on treated paper.

The first cameras were simple boxes. Talbot fitted his with lenses from telescopes and microscopes and stuck the sensitized paper in the back of the box. Some had peepholes to check the image before exposure. Most were small and crudely made. Talbot's wife, Constance, referred to them as his mousetraps. Daguerre adjusted focus by using fitted boxes – one sliding within the other to alter the distance between the lens in the front box and the sensitized plate in the rear. Exposure times were so long that shutter mechanisms were unnecessary. The photographer simply removed the lens cap for as many seconds – sometimes minutes – required.

WELLINGTON COUNTY MUSEUM AND ARCHIVES / 2754

John Connon, circa 1890. Although his family's photographic business was largely portraiture, his interest in panorama was aimed at landscape photography.



WELLINGTON COUNTY MUSEUM AND ARCHIVES / 3476

Thomas Connon, circa 1890. Trained as a grocer's apprentice, Connon channelled his avocational interest in photography into camera sales, then into studio portraiture. He began the experimentation with roll film that his son, John, would later perfect for the panoramic camera.

P-80

Once Talbot and Daguerre had found ways to fix the image, improvements in both the equipment and the process came quickly. It was, after all, the heyday of the industrial revolution, when technology was a simple hands-on affair and any clever amateur could see a new machine, understand its workings, and ask, "why didn't I think of that?"

It didn't take Talbot long to mount successive prints edge-to-edge and create a crude panoramic. Then in 1845 Friedrich von Martens put a swivel lens in front of a curved daguerreotype plate and panned a 150° field of view on a single exposure. His camera, called the Megaskop, combined a raft of clever ideas.

First, if you swivel the lens on its optical axis (where the light rays cross) the image projected behind the lens doesn't move and blur; moving the lens merely reveals more image.

Second, if you fix the lens at the front of a tube, and pinch the back of the tube to a vertical slit, the exposure time is not the time it takes to swivel the open lens through its entire arc, but merely the time elapsed as the narrow band of projected light passes a given spot. This allowed the photographer to control the exposure by rotating the lens faster in strong light, and more slowly through the shadows. Von Martens even pinched the bottom of the aperture slit slightly narrower than the top, so that the normally brighter sky would get a shorter exposure time than the darker foreground.

Finally, von Martens used a curved plate to maintain a constant focal length as the lens rotated.

The curved plate allowed a uniform focus from one end of the plate to the other. But it further complicated what was already the fussiest part of photography. A daguerreotype plate needed a cart-load of equipment to polish, sensitize, and develop the surface. Precise exposure to chemical solutions and heated vapours required specialized containers and frames to hold the plate.

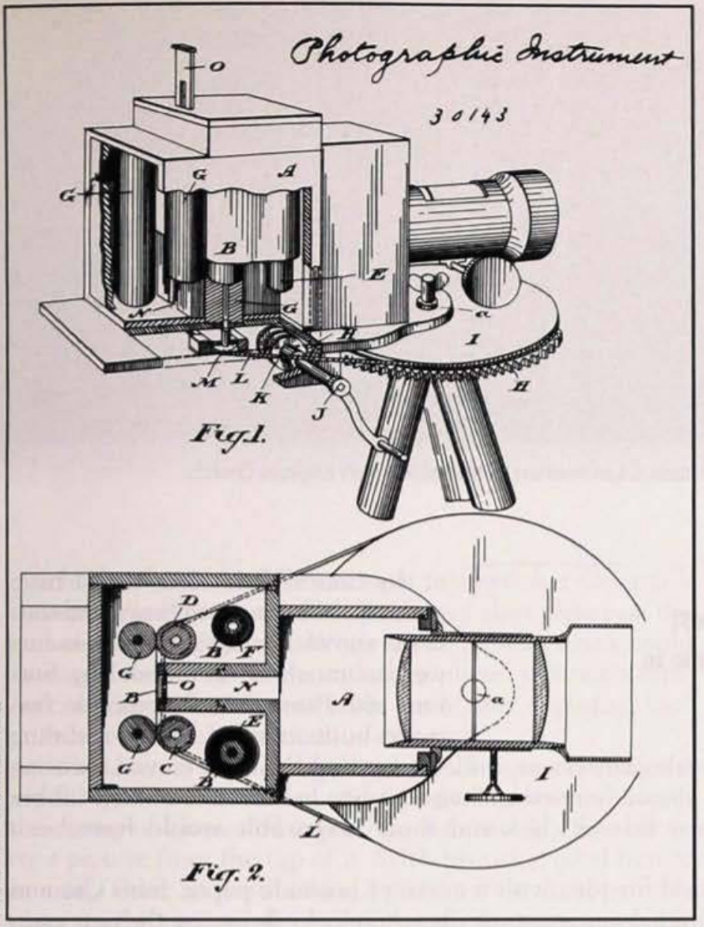
Thomas Connon took up photography in 1854, about three years after English sculptor Frederick Scott Archer had introduced the wet-collodion process. Although Connon might have tried the daguerreotype, like most photographers of the day he readily adopted the simpler collodion process.

Modern photographers would hardly consider the process simple. It involved coating a clean glass plate with a collodion, a syrupy ether and alcohol solutionthat contained a suitable salt, tilting the glass one corner at a time to coat and drain the surface evenly, dipping the tacky plate into a bath of silver nitrate, fitting it to a frame, inserting the still dripping frame into the camera, and making the exposure while the glass was still uniformly wet. Field equipment included narrow glass or ceramic baths with their sides slightly bowed, so the plates could be lowered (edgewise) into the silver nitrate solution without touching the sides of the vessel. And if that sounds tricky, the would-be panoramist had to do it all with a fragile, *curved*-glass plate.

Thomas Sutton's new wide-angle lens might have seemed, at first, like a simpler approach to a panoramic view than von Martens's swing-lens. It certainly had a simple beginning. Sutton had returned to England with a souvenir from Paris, a glass ball which produced a *faux* snowstorm when turned upside down. Sutton, however, looked through the hokey snow and noticed—as every six-year-old since has noticed—that the sphere both distorted and widened his view. By 1860 his spherical, water-filled lens had been fitted to a camera, affording a 120° field. That view, projected onto a flat plate, however, would have included the curved distortions apparent when the eye looks through a glass ball. Sutton's camera, like von Martens's, still had to wrap the wide-angle view around a curved glass plate to make it look more natural.

The Pantascopic camera, patented the year John Connon was born in 1862, managed a 110° view on a flat plate by turning the camera while pulling the sensitized plate past the back of the lens tube. Since the lens was stationary relative to the camera, it was always a constant distance from that part of the plate being exposed, eliminating the need for a curved plate. The camera turned on a key-wound clockwork spring. Pulleys and string drew the plate along on its rail, synchronized to the camera's speed, but moving in the opposite direction. A pair of whirling butterfly vanes governed speed, and ivory pegs, set in the top of the mahogany box, marked the field of view. It was, in short, a classic piece of nineteenth-century technology. A cuckoo or calliope tunes would have fit right in.

It was an era when few were immune from the giddy celebration of the machine. Gaston Tissandier compared photography to manned balloon flight, as "the prodigies of modern (1878) science." Not surprisingly, the historian was also an amateur photographer and balloonist. Russian airplane designer Aleksandr Mozhaysky's enthusiasms carried him (1884) off a ski jump astride a steam engine and wings to claim the first—albeit brief—powered flight. Carl Benz drove his three-wheeled horseless carriage for the first time in public (1885) and got so excited he forgot to steer, crashing into the brick wall outside




CANADIAN INTELLECTUAL PROPERTY OFFICE

**Patent drawings of John Connon's panoramic camera, 1888. Connon's contribution to panoramic photography was roll film holders that, linked to a turntable by a loop of cord, advanced in sync with the panning lens.**

his house. Locomotives sported iron frills and balloonists rode in wicker baskets.

If the industrial revolution had a silly side, we can credit the fact that invention was still largely an individual passion. Without corporate accountants to tell them it wouldn't sell, hobbyists, amateurs, and eccentrics were free to dabble in folly, and the bottom line be damned. Thus Bernard Otto Holtermann made a five-metre segmented panorama of Sydney Harbour using three glass negatives. Each piece of glass measured three by five inches and weighed sixty pounds. He hauled these, and his camera, to the top of a twenty-one-metre tower for the shot. At the other extreme, German court pharmacist and inventor Julius Neubronner, whose two hobbies were pigeons and cameras, built a tiny swivel lens camera that could be strapped to the breast of a homing pigeon and triggered in flight by a wind-up delay mechanism, producing a 1.2-by-3.1-inch aerial panorama.

Thomas Connon, too, began as a self-taught amateur. Trained as a grocer's apprentice, he worked as a shop assistant in Elora, spending his spare time painting and drawing. That hobby led him to *Art Journal*, whose articles on photography got him started. By 1854 he was taking pictures with his homemade cameras, by 1859 he was selling them, and by 1861 he had a small studio in the back of his own store.

In the late 1870s the old wet-plate collodion process gave way to the gelatin dry-plates. They were faster and easier than wet plates. And certainly less messy. In an August 9, 1924 feature in the London *Free Press*, John Connon recalled coming upon his father in 1881, as the older Connon pondered a sketch for building new plate holders, smaller than the old ones since it was no longer necessary to accommodate the drips. "I have been thinking," mused Thomas, "what a good thing it would be if instead of this gelatine emulsion being put on glass plates it could be spread on something like a roll of ribbon." Father and son doodled in two spools, for take-up and supply, and two more to position the ribbon behind the lens. Then Thomas remembered, "Down at Mr. Bain's woolen mill there is a machine for winding yarn, and after so many turns it rings a bell or goes snap. It needs something on one of these rollers to tell when enough has been rolled off."

Unknown perhaps to the Connons, at least half-a-dozen patents had already envisaged roll film and holders. Six years earlier, Leon Warnerke, a Russian living in England, had patented a perforated roll film. The perforations allowed two electrical contacts to meet, closing a circuit between a silver chloride battery and a small electric bell, ringing the bell when enough of the roll had been wound on. Mr. Bain's yarn winder might have done it better, but Warnerke et al had done it already, and in 1885 George Eastman would do it with great commercial success.

Whoever got the credit, the Connons early interest in roll film holders would be a key ingredient a few years later when John Connon determined to build his panoramic camera.

He began by experimenting with lens rotation and learned (as von Martens had in 1845), "that if the center of rotation coincides with that point in a lense where the light crosses, it does not matter how fast the lense may spin around, the picture remains perfectly still." The effect hardly seems plausible to those of us who inevitably blur snapshots by moving the camera. If it helps, imagine the view of a moving car outside your window. If you fix your eye straight out the window, a passing car may blur. If, instead, you fix your eye on the approaching car, and then walk past the window in one direction while the car passes in the other direction, you can keep it in view and in focus. The window is the axis on which your line of sight rotates. Perhaps it was that very implausibility which led Connon to test the phenomenon before he proceeded.

"With that point settled, the next thing was to try a picture," he later recalled. "Taking an empty box, that had once been used to hold Keen's mustard, I arranged a support against which to place some bromide paper in the shape of half a circle, and in the center of the semi-circle was placed the lense, between which and the paper, a narrow box, like a hollow door, swung on hinges above and below the lense." The box provided a narrow aperture, the same effect von Martens had achieved by pinching the end of his lens tube to a vertical slit.

Satisfied with his test results, Connon turned to village mechanic James Lister for lathe work on the first camera, and to violinist Alexander Spalding for the woodwork. Crafting a camera with the same care as a violin was not unusual

WELLINGTON COUNTY MUSEUM AND ARCHIVES / 2748

Panoramic view of Elora, Ontario, taken from the steeple of St. John's Anglican Church.

**"I went down to see my old friend, Col. Clarke, who had the highest building in the center of Elora, and asked him if he would allow me to try a picture from the top of it."**

at the time. While ideas might have germinated in mustard boxes and souvenir snowstorms, finished cameras were as much art as technology. Sutton's 1861 Panoramic, for example, featured built-in spirit levels, a sliding body of two fitted mahogany boxes, milled adjusting knobs, a curved focusing screen, ivory name plaque, curved mahogany plate holder, and curved rubber tanks with mahogany lids. A click-and-shoot disposable would have been unthinkable.

Although he tested his idea with a curve of bromide paper, John Connon made his real contribution to panoramic photography by designing the new camera with roll film holders, which – linked to the turntable by a loop of cord – advanced in sync with the panning lens. In effect, Connon's camera worked

## The Panoramic: Classic vs. Modern

Modern point-and-click "panoramic" cameras produce long, skinny pictures, but are they really panoramics or merely clever pretenders? The distinction is in the field of view.

Human eyes have a natural field of view of about 46°. Your peripheral vision may be wider than that, but with the eye fixed straight ahead, the edges gradually blur to indistinction. To see clearly beyond 46° you must move your eyes, or turn your head. To take in a 180° view, you'll need four or more glances along the way. The brain stitches them together into one continuous scan while the eyes pause to focus on a lamp, a door, this magazine, or whatever lies along the path.

A standard camera imitates the eye with a 46° field of view. It looks natural, even though it includes "distortions." Railway tracks seem to converge in the distance, though in reality they don't. Someone standing close to the camera appears larger than someone farther away, though the two may be exactly the same size.

A wide-angle lens can expand field of view, but at the risk of exaggerating perspective until the picture looks distorted. A 180° fisheye lens, for example, can cover four times the field of a standard lens, but it must also cram four times as much into the picture. People shrink. The tops of buildings bend to get in. A too-close nose looks enormous, while the ear disappears into a tiny dot, like railroad tracks on a head-sized horizon.

Some modern, disposable cameras have a slightly wider than standard lens – not enough to look distorted and unnatural, but hardly the whole-horizon view that panoramics promise. It is made to look like a panoramic by in-camera masking – cropping the top and bottom of the round image which the lens projects in order to produce a long, rectangular print. The print may be wider than normal, but the view isn't wider – just shorter.

The first panoramics were ordinary photographs, joined edge-to-edge. Although the joints were often less than seamless, the view could be extended to 360°. As nineteenth-century inventors learned to rotate the lens, and then the camera, they could widen the field of view in one continuous exposure – look Ma, no seams! Better still, by using standard lenses they could do it without wide-angle distortion. The classic panoramic cameras went beyond the range of the human eye to mimic what the mind adds to sight: joining a series of views (separate glances), rotating the lens (moving the eyes), or rotating the camera (turning the head).

In contrast, the skinny horizontal picture that cropping produces is more akin to squinting. ▣

E-754

much like the earlier Pantascopic, except that Connon's camera pulled film instead of the clumsy glass plate past the end of the aperture slit. While some Pantascopics could manage a 120° field of view with their plates, Connon's camera could keep turning until it ran out of film, capturing 360° or more on a single continuous exposure.

"On a sunny day in February, 1887, I went down to see my old friend, Col. Clarke, who had the highest building in the center of Elora, and asked him if he would allow me to try a picture from the top of it. With his usual good humor he said, 'There is no use taking a picture from the top of this place until you can make one of the whole way around.' He readily agreed to come along with me while I took it, still not knowing anything about what I was working at. What exposure would be necessary and how fast the camera should be turned was, at first, only a guess. I had provided a method of turning it slowly, using a worm gear ... for this first whole circuit picture. It worked, but was overexposed. I made a second one, in which the camera was swung around by a clock spring, and this was better."

It is worth noting that Connon's interest in panorama was aimed at landscape photography, despite the fact that the bulk of the family business was portraiture. Regular studio portraits could be lit with a powder or magnesium flash. But a flash would show as a vertical stripe on a panoramic shot (striped at that point where the traversing slit aperture happened to be passing when the flash went off).

With the introduction of the gelatin dry-plate process, exposure times—in good light—could be as short as 1/25 of a second. Hardly the stuff of today's stop-action photos, but fast enough to make the hand-held camera possible. And fast enough that portrait studios could dispense with the old iron back braces and rigid stares that left several generations of ancestors looking scarier in the album than they had been in life. Rapid improvements in roll film led to the introduction, in 1888, of Eastman's Kodak camera, preloaded for 100 exposures. Buyers sent the entire camera back to Eastman for factory processing and reloading. Eastman's sales slogan, "You press the button, we do the rest," drew the line between the few who would learn rotational optics and hire a violin maker in order to capture Elora's beauty, and the many who would be happy to point and click.

Faster film also made the no-flash portrait possible, the only kind panoramics were capable of. With large group portraits in natural light, panorama finally hit its commercial heyday. If you have a panoramic photograph on the wall or in your attic, chances are it's a group portrait, taken in the early half of the twentieth century. Grandpa's regiment, the company picnic, a family reunion, or graduating class. And chances are pretty good that some wag took advantage of the camera's slow traverse to pose at one end of the group, wait until the camera had passed and then run to the other end of the line and pose again, appearing twice in the same picture. The prankster would, however, have to avoid running between the group and the camera. Otherwise he would appear as a blur wherever he happened to pass that narrow band being exposed.

Marketing the first full-circuit camera proved more difficult than its making. Connon patented his design in the U.S. and England, as well as in Canada. He eventually convinced Stirn & Lyon of New York to produce the camera. Carl Stirn, however, took out his own patent on the spring-driven version of the Connon prototype, sent it to his brother Rudolf Stirn in Berlin for manufacture, and brought it back as The Wonder Panoramic Camera.

The same basic design surfaced again in 1904 as the Cirkut camera, patented by another Canadian, William J. Johnston, and manufactured by the Rochester Panoramic Camera Company. Two quick mergers and two years later, that too became part of Eastman Kodak. The Kodak Cirkut would become the most successful workhorse of the industry, sold continuously until 1949, and still in use today.

John Connon returned to Elora, poorer and wiser, in 1891, turning his attention to the making of dynamos for electric lighting and the care of his aging parents. He finally closed the studio after his father's death in 1899. William Johnston also returned to Canada after losing control of the Cirkut camera. He died in a Toronto boarding house in 1941. Adding insult to injury, major histories of the camera refer to both Connon and Johnston as Americans. ■

Charles Long's latest book, *Panorama America*, produced in collaboration with panoramic photographer Robert Erickson and published by Warwick Publishing, is scheduled for release next year.

by Stephen R. Bown

# Cormack's Quest

For centuries, Newfoundland settlement was never far from the sight or smell of the sea. Though Europeans discovered the island as early as 1000 A.D., and John Cabot landed on its shores in 1497, it wasn't until 1822 that a European, William Epps Cormack, decided to explore and describe the interior. He hoped his feat of walking across the island would attract others to settle and develop its interior resources. He also hoped to contact the last remaining members of the Beothuk, the aboriginal people of Newfoundland.

The latter endeavour, however, proved a melancholy one.

***September 5, 1822:*** *My travelling equipment being landed, the boat with the party which brought my Indian left us on her return to Bonaventure. On her disappearance into the gloomy gut, and when the reports of our farewell guns were no longer echoed to each other along its windings, an abyss of difficulties instantly opened in the imagination between the point where we stood and the civilized world we had just quitted, as well as between us and the centre of the unknown land. That we might be eaten up by a pack of wolves was more than probable, judging from the farewell forebodings of the inhabitants we had last seen, even if we should escape the Red Indians.*

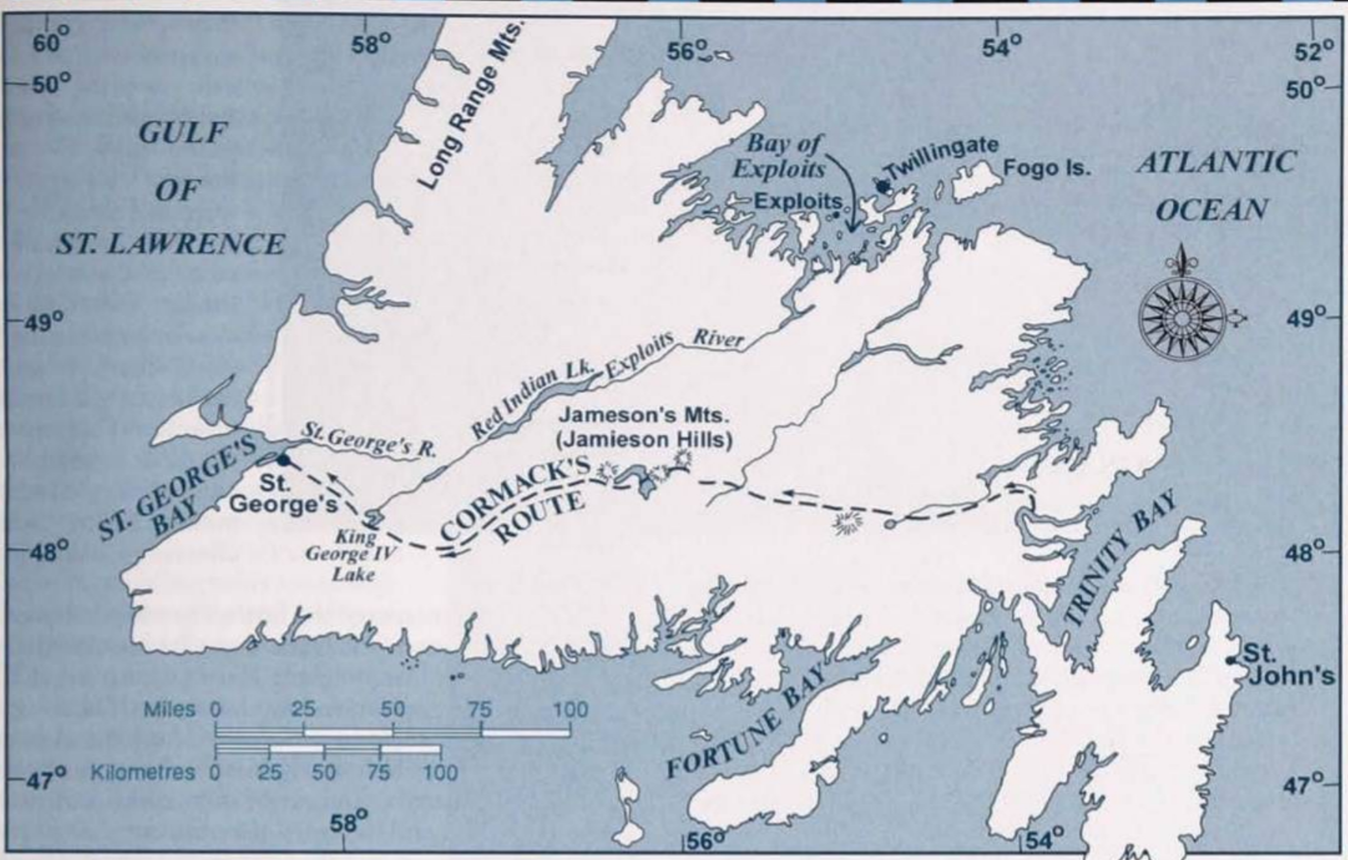
—NARRATIVE OF A JOURNEY ACROSS THE ISLAND OF NEWFOUNDLAND IN 1822

Literary licence aside, escaping the Red Indians – the Beothuk – was not a great fear of William Epps Cormack's when he and a lone travelling companion, a Micmac guide named Joseph Sylvester, set out on a journey across the uncharted interior of Newfoundland in late August 1822. An energetic and open-minded individual, with the characteristic curiosity of the nineteenth-century polymath, Cormack planned to explore and describe Newfoundland's back country, advance colonization by opening up the hinterland, and penetrate into the heart of the ancestral territory of the elusive Beothuk – the aboriginal people of Newfoundland – and make peaceful contact with them, despite the prevailing opinion that they were "ferocious and bloodthirsty savages, to whose bitter hatred of the white man was added a desire to be revenged, for the cruel treatment they had so long experienced at the hands of the latter."

The seemingly fearless Cormack was born to a prosperous Scottish merchant family in the ancient seaport of St. John's, Newfoundland on May 5, 1796, and returned to Scotland with his family when he was a child. During his years in Scotland, the inquisitive youth developed a great interest in geology, botany, and ethnology and graduated from Edinburgh University before being struck by wanderlust. After a jaunt to Prince Edward Island to found an agricultural utopia, he returned to St. John's in 1822, possibly to look after family business interests. While engaged in these prosaic pursuits, the fate of the mysterious Red Indians of the interior lured him onto an improbable and fantastic quest beyond the veil of mystery cloaking the heart of the rugged island.

By the time Cormack was planning his perambulation of the wild and tangled hinterland, there was serious fear that the Beothuk were on the verge of extinction, and his great hope was to initiate peaceful relations with them and help bring them within the protection of "civilization." Despite their reclusive and cruel reputation, he was convinced that their ferocity was likely exaggerated, and that he could buck a centuries-old tradition of mutual animosity and "turn aside their hostility, and bring them to a friendly understanding of his good intentions."

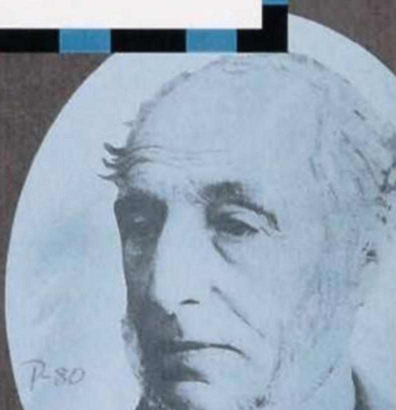
Retributive violence was common between the Beothuk and the English coastal fishermen. In over two centuries there had been little trade and almost no peaceful communication between the two peoples – few understood the Beothuk language and few captured Beothuk had survived long enough to learn much English. During the late eighteenth century the




CORMACK'S ROUTE ACROSS NEWFOUNDLAND, 1822.

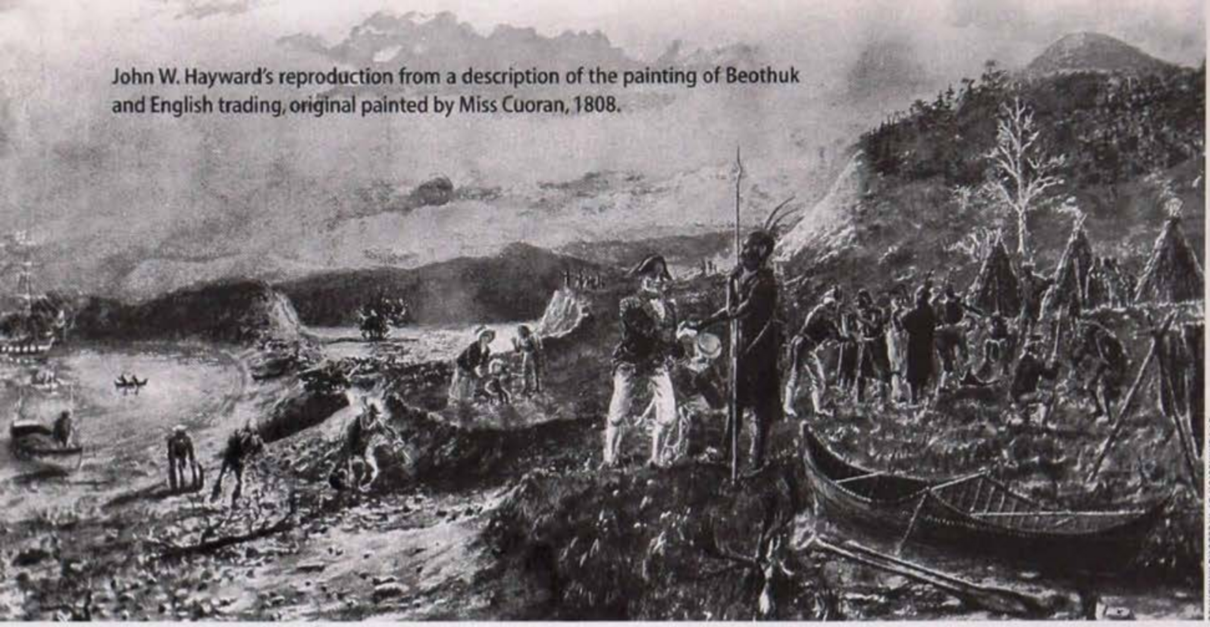
conflict intensified as English coastal settlements expanded, threatening the Beothuks' access to the valuable marine resources along the coast that their lives depended upon. Not only were English settlers inhabiting traditional Beothuk fishing sites, they were also constructing salmon weirs along the large rivers, preventing the fish from swimming upstream, and venturing inland to trap for the valuable furs of beaver, marten, and sable. Beothuks frequently plundered the English fishing stations for metal utensils, cloth, and other manufactured goods. According to English naturalist Sir Joseph Banks, who visited Newfoundland in 1766, "our people, who fish in these parts, (around Fogo Island) live in a continual state of warfare with them, firing at them whenever they meet them."

Rumours of the bloody conflict along the north coast shocked local government officials in St. John's as early as 1768, when Governor Hugh Palliser commissioned the brothers John and George Cartwright to navigate the Exploits River searching for the Beothuk to peacefully contact them. Although the Cartwrights failed to encounter a single Beothuk on their journey, John Cartwright later reported several incidents of barbarity that were related to him by the coastal fishermen. In one instance, an English settler proudly showed him the amputated skeletal hands of a Beothuk woman and boasted of her slaying.



CENTRE FOR NEWFOUNDLAND STUDIES

Peripatetic explorer, merchant, botanist, and philanthropist, William Epps Cormack (above, right) was an untiring individual with diverse interests. After leaving Newfoundland in 1829, he lived in Prince Edward Island for five years, helping to settle British immigrants, before moving to Australia, where he grew tobacco, then New Zealand, where he raised livestock. His later years were spent in British Columbia, where he involved himself in the struggle for representative government and served in the municipal government of New Westminster. He died in 1868.



John W. Hayward's reproduction from a description of the painting of Beothuk and English trading, original painted by Miss Cuoran, 1808.

BY PERMISSION OF INGEBORG MARSHALL

Although Cartwright's report was taken seriously by concerned government authorities (a series of governors beginning with Sir John Byron in 1769 issued proclamations forbidding settlers to attack the Beothuk), violence by both sides continued into the early nineteenth century. With a growing awareness of the Wild West–type anarchy along the coast, Magistrate John Bland of Bonavista commissioned an investigation of alleged atrocities in 1792, which he later forwarded to the governor of Newfoundland. Bland's sad report is a litany of violent crimes committed by both the English and the Beothuk, with the Beothuk the more victimized. The cruelty and violence of the acts he describes are so extreme that some historians have called into question their veracity, or at least their intensity. In one instance, for example, Bland relates that "in one of the wigwams was a man so much wounded as not to be able to stand. One of [fisherman John] Peyton's traps was lying by him, the bed of which he had been beating into arrows on a flat stone which served as an anvil. When they entered the wigwam, the wounded man sat on his bench and defended himself with the remaining part of the trap: but being soon overpowered, Peyton wrested it from him, and beat out his brains with it."

Other attempts to initiate peaceful relations with the Beothuk also met with failure. An expedition led by Captain David Buchan in 1811 ended tragically when two of his marines were killed by a band of Indians near the shore of Red Indian Lake. By the early nineteenth century, the Beothuk way of life, dependent upon seasonal access to the sea, was seriously threatened. Almost all their traditional coastal territory was inhabited by others and they were driven into the harsh interior – caught between the English on the coast and the Micmac in the south.

Although Cormack didn't realize it, things were quickly drawing to a close for the Beothuk when he set out to locate them in the fall of 1822. Heading southwest across the ragged terrain from Trinity Bay, the twenty-six-year-old adventurer began to appreciate the magnitude of the task he had set for himself. He and his lone companion stumbled over "wind fallen trees, underwood, and brooks … which, together with the suffocating heat in the woods, and mosquitoes hindered us from advancing." It was a slow slog through dense, scraggly pine forest, unavoidable marshes, crippling boulder fields and barren exposed hills. To make matters worse, they were fed upon by "the constant devouring enemy … the host of bloodthirsty flies." Only a slowly smouldering fire freed them from the feasting of the famished insects. "That no one would be injured by my annihilation," Cormack mused darkly, "was a cheering triumph at such a moment."

His concerns increased the further he travelled from the coast and "civilization." With the depredations and dangers of his roadless rambles weighing heavily on his mind, Cormack evidently began to question the wisdom of his original quest. "Aborigines might have wandered from the more central parts of the neighbourhood," he speculated, "and espied our fire from a distance, and might steal upon us unawares. … Apprehensions and thoughts of no ordinary kind occupy the mind unaccustomed to the untrodden boundless wilderness. Sleep is not looked for."

Another week of tedious trekking brought the pair to a ridge of uplands. As Cormack stared from the ridge across the plains to the west, he was struck by the majestic desolation of the land. "The hitherto mysterious interior," he wrote as he stared westward across the uncharted terrain dotted with lakes, streams, and dense forest, "lay unfolded below us, a boundless scene, an emerald surface, a vast basin … a picture of all the luxurious scenes of national cultivation, receding into invisibleness. The imagination hovers in the distance, and clings involuntarily to the undulating horizon of vapor, far into the west, until it is lost. A new world seemed to invite us onward …"

As the season advanced and the flies died, Cormack revelled in the abundance of the land. "The land berries were ripening, game birds were fledging and beasts were emerging to prey upon each other … the destruction of one creature would afford us nourishment and vigour for the destruction of others," he observed philosophically. It was certainly not a shortage of provisions that drew Cormack from his reverie, it was a meeting with the legendary Red Indians. By October 10, after a month and a half of travel, he was becoming concerned. "Being now near the centre of the Island," he recorded, "we had not yet seen a trace of the Red Indians. It had been supposed that all the central parts of the island were occupied by these people, and I had been looking for them daily." It was quite a few years later that Cormack learned that by the time of his journey, the Beothuk had been reduced to a bedraggled band of fewer than thirty individuals scavenging around the shores of their ancestral lake, and on the southerly route chosen by his guide, his chance of en-

countering Beothuk was very slim.

Nevertheless, as they climbed through the peaks of what Cormack named Jameson's Mountains (after his professor at Edinburgh University; now Jamieson Hills) and descended upon a large lake, they noticed a faint coil of smoke spiralling through the trees. "The time we hoped, had at last come to meet the Red Indians," he confided. As they progressed along the shore of the lake, Cormack fired his gun in salute and waited for the inevitable encounter. "Soon afterwards, to my great delight, there appeared among some woody islets in front, which precluded the view of the other side of the lake, a small canoe with a man seated in the stern, paddling softly towards us, with an air of serenity and independence possessed only by the Indian."

The man, to Cormack's disappointment, was a Montagnais from Labrador named James John who had brought his family across the Strait of Belle Isle earlier in the season because he had heard of the good hunting. James John had neither encountered nor seen any traces of the elusive Beothuk in the previous months. Cormack's romantic notions of the noble savage, however, were well developed, and he was inspired to write a poem in the man's honour: a dubious epithet if ever there was one, more a testament to Cormack's poetic prowess than James John's lordly demeanour.

*I am monarch of all I survey,*
*my right there is none to dispute;*
*From the centre all round to the sea,*
*I am lord of the fowl and the brute.*

After feasting with John's family, Cormack and Sylvester departed westward. During the following few weeks, Cormack continued his trek through the dense brush and became concerned he was being led astray well to the south of Red Indian Lake, the reputed homeland of the Beothuk. "My Indian disputed with me about the course we should pursue, he obstinately insisting upon going to the southward. Perhaps he had a secret desire not to pass too near to the Red Indian country." It became a point of contention between them, and to avoid a

## The Decline of a People

One of the last of the Beothuks, Demasduit, renamed Mary March by her white captors, lived in Twillingate and St. John's between March and June 1819 where, among other things, she contributed to the compilation of Beothuk vocabulary. Despite a history of enmity between the Beothuk and the European settlers, Demasduit's demeanour earned her the respect of many with whom she came in contact, and caused some to soften their views towards the island's aboriginal inhabitants. Attempts were made to return her to her people, but in January 1820, she succumbed to tuberculosis. Her body was buried at Red Indian Lake, next to that of her husband, Nonosabasut, who had been killed by furriers bent on recovering stolen property. In November 1828, Cormack came across the burial site during his cross-Newfoundland trek. He removed a number of the funereal items as well as the skulls of Demasduit and her husband and sent them to the university museum in Edinburgh, an act that would be considered grave robbing today.

Some experts consider the portrait above may be of Shawnawdithit, the last known survivor of the Beothuk people, and the niece of Nonosabasut. Shawnawdithit, who died in 1829, witnessed the murder of her uncle and the capture of her aunt, as well as their burials at Red Indian Lake. In 1823, starving and weak, she was taken into a white household at Exploits where she spent the next five years. Soon after the 1827 founding of the Beothuk Institution, she was brought to St. John's, where she resided with Cormack until his departure from Newfoundland in 1829. Unsuccessful in contacting any Beothuk during his exploration of Newfoundland's interior, Cormack focused his attention on his guest, teaching her English and extracting as much information as he could about her people. A good portion of what we know about the Beothuk today comes from Cormack's relationship with Shawnawdithit.

BY PERMISSION OF INGEBORG MARSHALL

*A female Red Indian of Nfld. "Mary March" painted by W. Gosse at St. John's Nfld. July '41 fm an original by Lady Hamilton May 1821.*

According to Ingeborg Marshall in her definitive *A History and Ethnography of the Beothuk*, population estimates of the Beothuk people at contact with Europeans vary, from between five hundred and sixteen hundred people. But by the time of Shawnawdithit's capture, the Beothuk had dwindled to about a dozen. As permanent English settlement advanced in coastal Newfoundland, the Beothuk were pushed away from their traditional fishing and hunting areas, and their migratory food-gathering patterns interrupted. Unlike many natives in Canada who formed reciprocal arrangements with Europeans through trade, the Beothuk remained at first aloof from the invading population, then began to engage in reprisals as the English stepped up persecution. Added to this cycle of violence was disease. Tuberculosis was a particular scourge, and as the population weakened and was hindered in its food gathering, malnutrition set in. With this second debilitating cycle in place, the numbers of Beothuk began to decline precipitiously. By the time the English became alert to the possibility of Beothuk extinction in the early nineteenth century, it was too late. ♜

confrontation (or to avoid being abandoned in the mountains), he resigned himself to the southern route.

While camped at King George IV Lake in late October, with snow smothering the hillsides, Cormack knew that venturing north toward Red Indian Lake would be nearly impossible. Disappointed, he decided to quickly traverse the remainder of the distance to the coast, a five-day scramble over the Long Range Mountains to St. George's Bay, leaving further discovery for another expedition. From the small community of St. George's, Cormack walked and boated three hundred kilometres east to Fortune Bay, where he caught a ship bound for England without having encountered or observed any traces of the elusive Red Indians.

His interest in the Beothuk did not diminish, however. Following his fruitless cross-island trek, he actively sought out news or information about the Beothuk after returning to St. John's from England in 1823, and collected secondhand accounts of their presence along the coast of the Bay of Exploits. "The one desire of his life," said one observer, "so actuated him that he seemed to look upon himself as the instrument by which the amelioration of the condition of the Beothuk was to be accomplished." In 1827, on a trip to Twillingate on Newfoundland's north coast, he founded the Beothuk Institution with the objective of bringing "within the protection of civilization that neglected and persecuted tribe, the Red Indians of Newfoundland." Many leading members of the community joined the institution, and they resolved that the sole known living Beothuk, the young woman Shawnawdithit, who was "taken prisoner in a state of starvation some years before by several English fishermen at the seacoast," should "be placed under the paternal care of the Institution" and be sent to St. John's to live with Cormack.

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*Charles Larpenteur, 1838*

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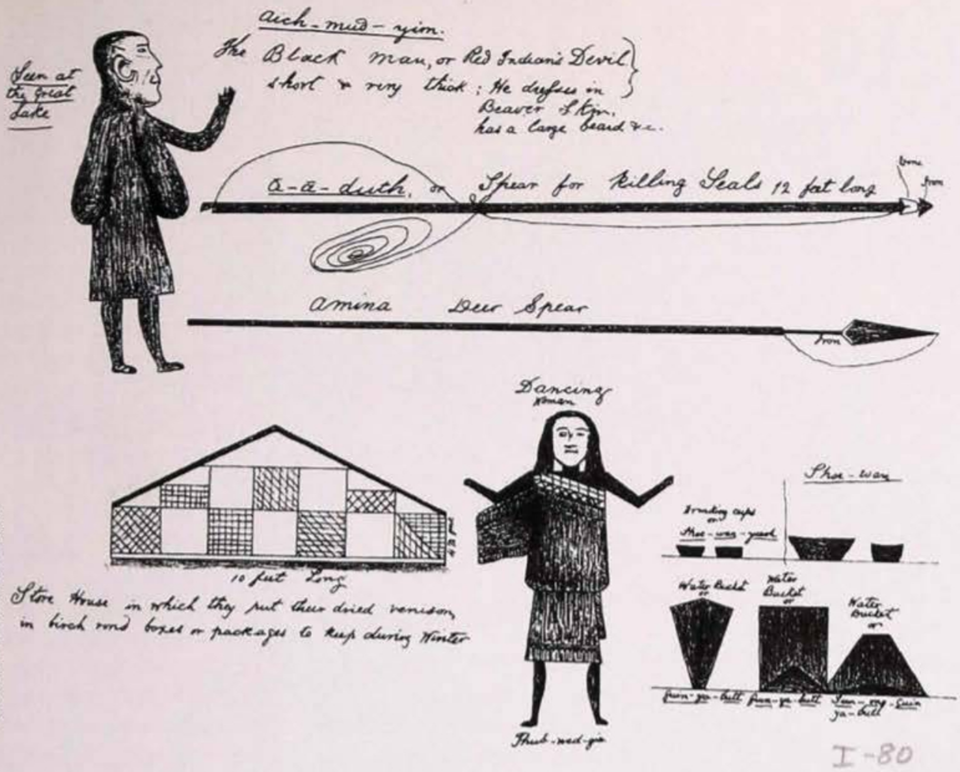
In October 1827, soon after Shawnawdithit arrived in St. John's, Cormack and three native companions set out for the Exploits River. After traversing the bulk of the Beothuk's historical domain along the river, he decided to venture toward their ancestral lake, Red Indian Lake, a "beautifully majestic and splendid sheet of water." Even here, Cormack found nothing but remnants of habitation: "everywhere indications, that this had long been the central and undisturbed rendezvous of the tribe when they had enjoyed peace and security."

After lingering for two days skulking in groves on a nearby hill, scanning the valley for camp smoke, no sign of them did they find. "We spent several melancholy days wandering on the borders of the east end of the lake, surveying the various remains of what we now contemplated to have been an unoffending and cruelly extirpated race." During the uneasy days, they kept a large fire at night and "when it blazed up at times," Cormack recounted, "I could not help observing that two of my Indians evinced uneasiness and want of confidence in things around, as if they thought themselves usurpers on the Red Indian territory. From time immemorial none of the other tribes had ever encamped near this lake." All they found during their dreary sojourn was the deserted, decaying ruins of wigwams and dozens of graves scattered through the woods along the shore of the lake.

"These people appear to have always shown great respect for their dead," Cormack wrote, as the party wandered through the eerie mounds of a great lakeside ossuary. Wandering through the silent barrows, he observed many "modes of sepulture" that probably corresponded to rank or social status. Sometimes human remains, wrapped in birchbark along with property and miniature goods, were perched atop a scaffold platform about one-and-a-half metres off the ground. Others were folded into small log-cabin-like boxes lined with birch rind. The most common grave, however, was simply a birchbark-covered body buried under a cairn of carefully placed stones. They were all "in the most perfect state of preservation."

The most elaborate structure was a metre-square hut, one-and-a-half metres tall in the centre "well secured against the weather ... and the intrusion of wild beasts." Breaking open the door of the sylvan tomb, with his "curiosity raised to the highest pitch," Cormack spied two adult corpses wrapped in deerskin shrouds laid out fully across the floor. About the shadowy interior were strewn small carvings of a man and woman, a doll, several small models of canoes, axes, a bow and arrows, various ornamented culinary utensils, and "many other things some of which we did not know the use or meaning." They found nothing living.

As Cormack continued his search of the eerily silent lake for any signs of life, he marvelled at the remnants of the great "deer fences" that stretched for almost fifty kilometres along the shore of the lake, and another sixty-five kilometres along the Exploits River. Evidently the Beothuk herded the migrating deer toward the fences, which only had a few openings. As the panicked creatures hastily squeezed through the small




NATIONAL ARCHIVES OF CANADA / C-038862

**While Shawnawdithit stayed with Cormack in St. John's, she made a number of sketches illustrating encounters between Beothuk and Englishmen, various Beothuk artifacts, and her experiences as a captive. A dozen sketches survive, though there are indications she produced more, which have since been lost.**

breaks in the fence and lunged into the river and lake, hunters speared them from their canoes. "There must have been hundreds of the Red Indians, and that not many years ago to have kept up these fences and pounds," he lamented. "Now the deer pass the whole line unmolested."

Late in November, Cormack despaired of finding traces of the Beothuk and prepared to leave the interior. He and his guides constructed large rafts, launched themselves into the Exploits River, and were propelled to the coast after a four-day journey. Soon Cormack was back in St. John's, where he presented his gloomy findings to the other members of the Beothuk Institution. After failing to locate a living Beothuk, Cormack, despairing of ever encountering any in the interior, took a great interest in the young woman Shawnawdithit, who by good fortune proved to be remarkably curious and intelligent. Cormack refers to her as the last of her people, and during the winter of 1828–1829, they worked together "to communicate what would otherwise have been lost." In spite of urgings by the bishop of Nova Scotia to teach her Christianity, Cormack was more interested in learning from her as much about her religion and customs as possible.

While living with him in the city, Shawnawdithit drew twelve "story maps," annotated by Cormack, that tell the sad tale of the last days of her people and highlight the domestic and religious life of the people such as food preparation, tool use, and house construction. "I elicited from her most interesting facts," he recorded, "and a history of her people which together with my own observations when in search of them in the interior, form nearly all the information that can ever be obtained relating to these aborigines." To previously compiled lists of some few hundred Beothuk words, he added and categorized about another one hundred or so more learned from Shawnawdithit that "proved the Beothuks to be a distinct tribe from any hitherto discovered in North America." Much of the existing knowledge of Beothuk history and material culture comes from Cormack's collections of artifacts and the drawings of Shawnawdithit. Unfortunately, the bows, arrows, spears, model of a canoe, and caribou clothing that he brought from the vicinity of Red Indian Lake have been lost.

"As she acquires the English language," Cormack wrote mere months before she died, "she becomes more interesting; and I have lately discovered the key to the Mythology of her tribe." Shawnawdithit, the last of her people, lived her final days linguistically alone far from her ancestral homeland along Red Indian Lake. She died in St. John's of tuberculosis on Saturday, June 6, 1829, at age twenty-eight, soon after Cormack departed Newfoundland on a trip to England.

Unfortunately, though Cormack's diligent observations of weather, soil, flora, fauna were later collected in his *Narrative of a journey across the Island of Newfoundland in 1822*, which remains a Newfoundland classic, many of his notes have never been uncovered and the religion and other cultural practices of the Beothuk people have largely remained a mystery. It is speculated that Cormack was preparing the information for publication, but his adventurous life prevented it. For a time, the ever-roving adventurer lived in Australia and then New Zealand, before moving to California in 1848 and then British Columbia in 1859, probably moving north with the gold rush. He died there in 1868.

Before he left Newfoundland, however, Cormack perhaps explained why he never published the bulk of his ethnographic observations (if indeed any such material existed): "To begin in the year 1829 to write a history of the Red Indians of Newfoundland," he wrote, "is like beginning to write the history of an extinct people. All that they have left behind them being their name and one wonders that they left nothing else . … We have traces enough left only to cause our sorrow that so peculiar and so superior a people should have disappeared from the earth like a shadow." ▣

**For further reading:**
***Narrative of a journey across the Island of Newfoundland in 1882*** **by W.E. Cormack; edited by F.A. Burton. Longmans, Green, 1928.**
***A History and Ethnography of the Beothuk*** **by Ingeborg Marshall. McGill-Queen's University Press, 1996.**

Stephen R. Bown is a freelance writer with a special interest in adventurers and explorers. His last article for the *Beaver*, on Upper Canada's last deadly duel, appeared in August/September 1999. His book, *Moving in Canada: What You Need to Know Before Relocating to a New Province or Territory*, was published in 1999 by McGraw-Hill Ryerson Limited.

# Curiosities of the Country

The magnificent Hudson's Bay Company Museum Collection finds a home in a new gallery at the Manitoba Museum of Man and Nature.

Among the various curiosities of the Hudson's Bay Company Museum Collection—and it is a *particularly* curious item—is a ram's head, its bony horns curled tightly like two petrified prune Danish, its eyes, though glassy fakes, glowering at the viewer. And why wouldn't they glower? The noble beast's head has not even been mounted ceremoniously upon some wall. Sir George Simpson, HBC governor in North America from 1826 to 1860, had the skull lopped, the brain scooped, and a lovely little snuff holder placed in the cranium's centre. The ram's poor head had been turned into, well, a curiosity.

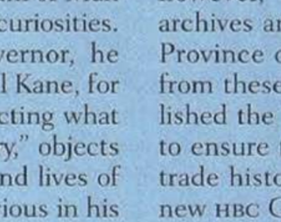
Ram's head snuff box from the mid-1800s belonging to HBC Governor Sir George Simpson. Engraved on the cigar container lid are the words "Governor-in-Chief of Rupert's Land."

There are ten thousand pieces in the HBC collection, the mainstay of the new Hudson's Bay Company Gallery, which opens May 2 in a new wing of the Manitoba Museum of Man and Nature, and many of them are curiosities. Indeed, when Simpson was governor, he charged such frontier artists as Paul Kane, for whom he was a patron, with collecting what he called "curiosities of the country," objects that reflected the natural history and lives of the continent's native peoples—curious in his ethnocentric view, but hardly curious to their owners.

Whatever the distinction between curious and commonplace, the Hudson's Bay Company collection of artifacts, representing three centuries of history, ranging from clothing, jewellery, and household items to journals, tools, and weapons, and denoting the daily lives of the fur traders, company personnel, and the aboriginal people with whom they did business, is almost unparalleled as a repository of Canadiana. Along with the Hudson's Bay Company archives, housed at the Provincial Archives of Manitoba, it forms the world's largest and most comprehensive source of information on the history of Western Canada's fur trade, aboriginal people, discovery, exploration, and settlement in the eighteenth, nineteenth, and early twentieth centuries. As such, the collection and the HBC Gallery vaults the Manitoba Museum of Man and Nature into the pantheon of the world's premier museological research centres.

Though Simpson and others collected objects during their various tenures with the HBC, the collection as such did not have a formal beginning until the 1920s when some personnel within the HBC took steps to retrieve and preserve artifacts that represented the company's remarkable role in North America. For a time, the collection was displayed at the Hudson's Bay department store in Winnipeg, but in the early 1960s, the in-store museum was closed and the artifacts packed and stored away, leaving the collection largely unseen for nearly two generations. In 1994, however, the HBC donated its corporate archives and its collection of artifacts to the Province of Manitoba. With the tax saving from these magnificent gifts, the Bay established the Hudson's Bay History Foundation to ensure the maintenance of HBC- and fur-trade history-related projects, including the new HBC Gallery.

Now the collection, which has grown with time, despite its withdrawal from public notice, will be accessible for viewing in a series of permanent and temporary exhibits at the gallery. Of course, all ten thousand (and growing still!) artifacts cannot be seen at once. Indeed, the gallery's size only allows a fraction of the treasures to be displayed at any one time. We can hardly begin to show the breadth and depth of the collection in these two pages either, but herein are a few of the more representative—and perhaps curious—of the Hudson's Bay Company Museum Collection. ■




Gunpowder chest from the nineteenth century discovered at the Trout Lake, Ontario, HBC post. It bears the markings "Royal Engineers Department, Fort Garry".

*Facing page, from top left:*

Detail of a snowshoe with decorative painted geometric design lacing originating from the Attimamek First Nation in the upper Great Lakes region.

*Shamam with Assistants and Apprentice* by Charles Edenshaw. Born around 1839, Edenshaw or Tahaygen was a Haida artist who during a long career (he died in 1920) recorded and preserved Haida culture in argillite as well as gold, silver, wood, and ivory.

Silver candelabrum presented to Sir George Simpson in 1840 by the chief factors and chief traders of Rupert's Land.

Watercolour of Tattannaaeuk, Inuit interpreter to Sir John Franklin and Sir George Back, by John Halkett, business associate and brother-in-law of Lord Selkirk. The painting was done from a sketch made at York Fort in 1832.

A quillwork panel for a cradleboard from the 1820s. Of Red River Valley origin, the panel is made from woven dyed porcupine quill, trade cloth, ribbon, tin tags, thimbles, and yarn.

An officer's cassette, late nineteenth century. Among the items in this travel kit are tin plates, a tin cup, tin food and spice boxes, cutlery, a liquor decanter, corks, shotgun cleaning tools, shot and powder measure, a screwdriver for a gun, and a wooden inkwell.

Woman's *amautik*, Cape Dorset, Baffin Island, early twentieth century. The inner parka or *atigi* has an *amaut* or pouch at the back to accommodate an infant.

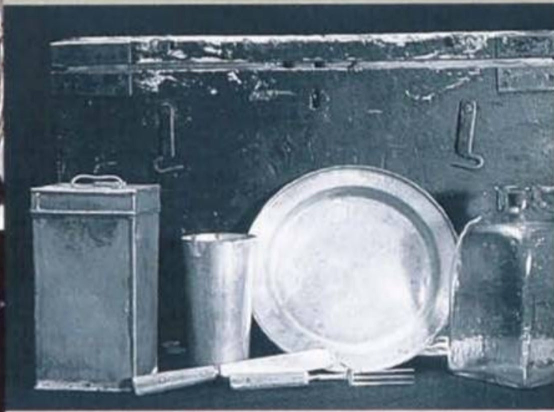
Snuff box detail.

Beaver felt hat and case. The preferred material for the manufacture of felt hats, which came into fashion in the late sixteenth century, was the underfur of the beaver. From the close of the seventeenth century until the 1840s, when the silk hat came into fashion, the English felt-hat industry dominated the world market.

Etched and coloured scenes on a walrus tusk, from Chukchi, Siberia.

ALL PHOTOS COURTESY OF THE MANITOBA MUSEUM OF MAN AND NATURE

TATTANNAÆUK
AUGUSTUS



by Maureen Simpkins

# Spoken Word

**No pen and ink recorded the precontact history of Canada's First Nations. The word was spoken. Stories were told and retold, passed from generation to generation. More than a lively art, storytelling was the vital chronicling of a people, but when Europeans brought new ways to communicate and new versions of history, oral traditions began slowly to wither. But some natives such as Ontario's Louis Bird have dedicated themselves to preserving the stories of the Elders and maintaining the oral tradition. The best stories turn on eloquence, imagination, and drama, and, in the case of this sly inversion of the first contact between First Nations and Europeans, not a little humour.**

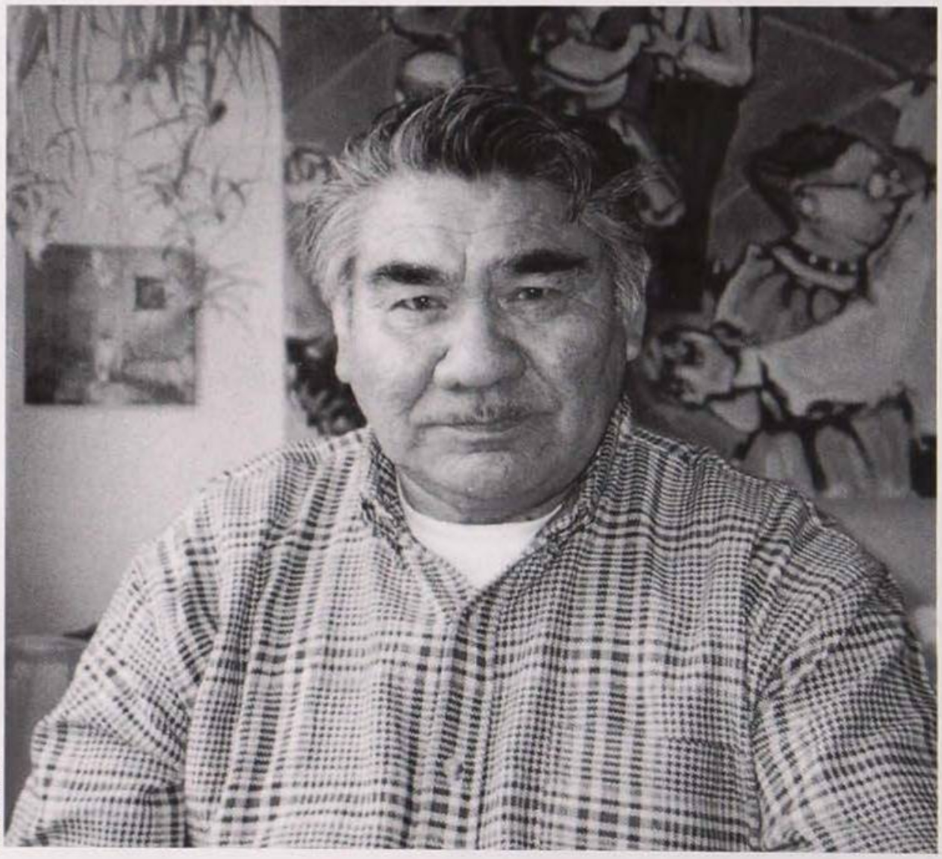
Huddled close to the fire, he would listen to his uncle tell stories, all the while counting the number of times his uncle's spit would sizzle into the flames as he got more animated. Later, Louis Bird and his cousins would laugh as they imitated their uncle. Now, six decades later, it is Louis who tells stories, choosing his words carefully and confidently, a man who clearly loves to play with language. Mushkego Cree is Louis's mother tongue, so the words he would like to use don't always translate very well into English. He thinks for a moment, then experiments with a word or two before settling on just the right one.

I've known Louis Bird for ten years. His stories sweep me into his world along the rugged muskeg coastline of western Hudson Bay and James Bay, taking me to a time before the arrival of guns and Europeans, when physical survival was intricately linked to knowledge of animals, plants, weather, and the land. Other stories describe skirmishes with other aboriginal peoples or with the European newcomers. They are not cute or fanciful stories. They often reflect the harshness of the environment and ancient rules of survival. They tell of murder, jealousy, and suffering, but also of kindness and the determination to survive. Louis's stories can go on for hours or days and may involve many characters who impart something about being a good hunter or a good parent or about respecting the environment.

> *There was a man in those days before the European came. The Elders used to give up their life for the safety of their young generation. And this one old man asked to be left behind so the young people would not starve or would not be in need because he was getting old. He instructed his descendants to make a nice tepee and to leave him there to die, so they could exist.*

Louis Bird was born in 1934 in the wilderness between Fort Severn and Winisk in northern Ontario. During the 1930s, his parents and grandparents lived in a cabin and trapped fox. Louis was about four years old the first time he saw a nonnative person or, as he would say, "a strange-looking person." That person was the priest who lived in the only building in Winisk.

Like many of his generation, he was sent to residential school at age five. He travelled by river canoe to Hudson Bay, where the schooner *Repulse* took him to James Bay and the community of Fort Albany. He was a



MAUREEN SIMPKINS

Louis Bird, oral historian and storyteller. Recognizing more than thirty years ago the threat modernity was bringing to the oral tradition, Bird set out to document the stories of the Cree Elders. He has subsequently taped hundred of hours worth of tales and reminiscences that have been handed down from generation to generation along the Hudson Bay lowlands.

MAN ALWAYS SITTING IN LONGHOUSE CEREMONY / LEVIUS FIDDLER

year away from home the first time. Later, he would spend two years without seeing his parents. At age eleven, after several years of residential school, he returned to his parents feeling he had "lost the joy" of their bush life. He looked down on his parents. They didn't have any sense of time.

> *And this person in particular survived the winter by a miracle and in the springtime when the geese and other summer birds came, he happened to get out from where he was left to die and went to crawl close to a creek.*

His parents ate when they were hungry and washed when necessary. To him they were now "uncivilized." He felt detached from them and their way of life, and it took him a good year before he would settle into the bush life again. But when he did, it would be the stories of the Mushkego Cree that would sustain him. "It's like living in a story," Louis says.

The stories stay with you.

> *And he happened to stop right under the poplar tree, close to the creek. At the same time there was another man who was trapping, looking for the otters in the spring because they use otters for their shoes and moccasins. And the trapper came upon this little creek and he heard someone humming … singing. A man. Then he went and looked and saw where the voice was coming from. He came upon the poplar trees, just barely breaking buds for the leaves. And there, under the trees, sat the old man, blind. And he was humming a song. The trapper didn't understand. He didn't know the name of the song, but he walked up to the person and said, hello. And the old man said, "Ah … there grandson. I am glad that you came. I was hoping that someone would pass by this creek so that they could find me, and I can be with people again."*

Louis Bird began collecting stories around 1965 when he realized that the Elders who knew the Cree stories were dying. Since then he has collected hundreds of hours of taped stories, making it his mission to retell, document, and keep alive the stories of his people. He has traveled from village to village, from Winisk to Attiwapiskat and Kashechewan and down to Fort Albany, Moosenee, and Moose Factory to listen. Some stories stop at one village or area and continue on in the next. There are different versions of stories and Louis is curious about what makes them different, even if the themes remain the same. Since most Elders don't like to be tape recorded, Louis simply listens, then records in his own voice what he just heard.

> *So the man says, "Yes, I can take you. I will take care of you." And he asks, "How are you? How did you come to be here by yourself?"*

Louis has seven daughters, and when they wanted to hear the stories in English, he began to translate, retelling them in the "to-be-continued" segments the way his uncle had taught him. His uncle had also tried to teach him that stories should be told for a reason, usually to teach a lesson. At the time, Louis didn't realize that, but he did learn that there were different levels of delivery depending whether you were telling the story to a child, a teenager, an adult, or an Elder. Today, he constantly adjusts the stories in his head to edit the harshness or the elements that he doesn't think the listener is ready for.

In 1985 there was a disastrous flood in Winisk. Two people were killed and many people lost their homes and possessions. While Louis was lucky to be away in Sioux Lookout, he lost a substantial portion of his tape collection. The village was moved further up river and renamed Peawanuk. Undaunted in his mission to collect and document Cree stories, Louis continued on.

Louis recounts a time when the Church did not like the Mushkego Cree to speak of the spiritual part of their history. The stories, he says, "went underground, so to speak, and were told in the bush." He feels it is important to make stories a legitimate part of native culture and history and use them as they were originally intended – as an educational resource.

> *The man says, "I was left to die and instructed my descendants to leave me here to die, but unfortunately my time has not come. I have been sitting here amongst these white men and they couldn't do a damn thing about me." He chuckled. And that was the first time that the guy who found the old man heard about the white man. The old man says, "Those white men who stand amongst me – they couldn't do anything to me." He chuckled again. And it so happened that he was a prophet, the old man.*

Those of us who don't live in northern Ontario are fortunate that Louis attends storytelling festivals nationally as well as internationally. Currently an Elder-in-residence at the University of Manitoba, he is recruiting graduate students to help him transcribe tapes to make them more accessible to native-studies students. ■

Maureen Simpkins recently completed her PhD in education at the University of Toronto specializing in aboriginal oral tradition and the law. She also teaches in the native studies department at Trent University in Peterborough.

# Reviews

*Featured Books*

■ **Bark, Skin and Cedar: Exploring the Canoe in Canadian Experience**
*By James Raffan*
*Harper-Collins*
*Toronto, 1999*
*274 pp., $30.00 hardcover*

■ **The Canoe in Canadian Cultures**
*Edited by John Jennings, Bruce W. Hodgins & Doreen Small*
*Natural Heritage*
*Toronto, 1999*
*300 pp., $24.95 paper*

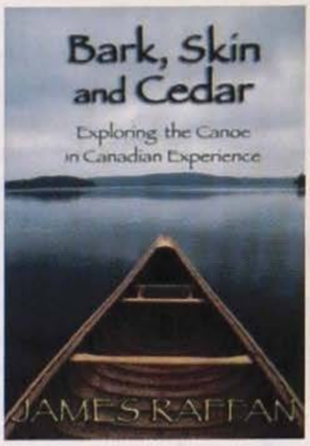
■ **Pauline Jewett: A Passion for Canada**
*By Judith McKenzie*
*McGill-Queen's University Press*
*Montreal and Kingston, 1999*
*204 pp., illus., $32.95 hardcover*

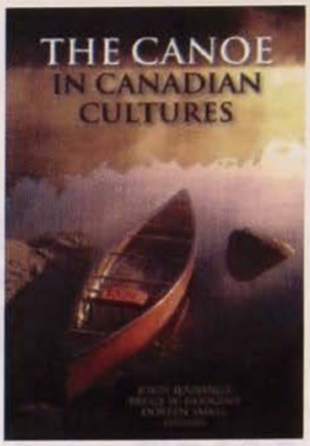
■ **Walter Gordon and the Rise of Canadian Nationalism**
*By Stephen Azzi*
*McGill-Queen's University Press*
*Montreal and Kingston, 1999*
*300 pp., illus., $34.95 hardcover*

■ **The West: Regional Ambitions, National Debates, Global Age**
*By Gerald Friesen*
*Penguin Books*
*Toronto, 1999*
*189 pp., $19.99 paper*

■ **The Changing Face of War: Learning from History**
*Edited by Allan D. English*
*Published for Royal Military College of Canada by McGill-Queen's University Press*
*Montreal & Kingston, 1998*
*293 pp., $45.00 hardcover*

## Can You Canoe?




When I put my paddle in the water I rejoice at a feeling of perfect balance that I've experienced only in a canoe. I sense that the authors and editors of these two books have an equal, or perhaps even greater, affinity for the joy that canoeing brings to their lives. James Raffan's ***Bark, Skin and Cedar: Exploring the Canoe in Canadian Experience*** does a better job of evoking in prose this sense of joy than do the essays contained in Jennings, Hodgins, and Small's, ***The Canoe in Canadian Cultures***, but that is to be expected given that Raffan's book is a single, coherent essay, while Jennings et al. is a collection of essays by multiple authors on diverse topics.

In *Bark, Skin and Cedar*, Raffan takes the reader on a voyage through history, weaving his own experiences and exploits with stories from the past in a highly readable narrative which explores the meaning of the canoe across time and cultures in Canada. While he clearly wants us to take the canoe seriously, suggesting that the First Ministers would benefit from a canoe trip together (how would the cost-sharing arrangements work?), Raffan is not above humour, describing with relish HBC Governor George Simpson's penchant for pageantry, the culinary excesses of early canoe clubs, and his own misadventures recanvassing a canoe in his backyard. This inventiveness and humour are best illustrated in a chapter on "magical canoes" in which he blends together tales of engineering students competing to build concrete canoes and stories of creation and transformation from First Nations, Scots, and Québécois traditions. For those who want to track down a source or simply read further, the endnotes document the published literature and interviews on which the book is based. Read *Bark, Skin and Cedar* for pleasure – whether you are a paddler or not – in bed or over a winter weekend.

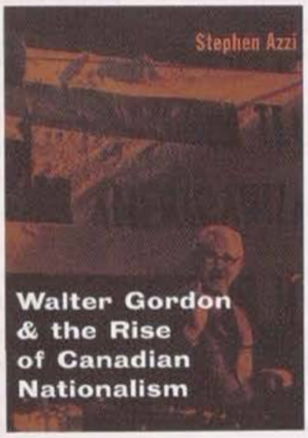
By contrast, the collection of eighteen essays edited by Jennings, Hodgins, and Small requires determination to get through and is probably intended for the aficionado. There is everything here from a dense technical discussion by Eugene Arima about the design features and history of "northern skin-covered watercraft" (coracles, umiaks, and kayaks) and dugout canoes, to a contemplative piece on the "dao of paddling" by Bert Horwood. The endnotes reflect the variety of topics and approaches, some of which reflect extensive new research in a variety of sources. Published as the proceedings of the second Canoe in Canadian Cultures Conference, sponsored by the Canadian Canoe Museum, in Peterborough, Ontario, these essays are somewhat uneven in terms of readability and rigour, a common flaw of this type of collection.

My favourite piece in Jennings et al. is Gwyneth Hoyle's "The Dark Side of the Canoe," in which she describes a number of canoe tripping ventures that went wrong. Hoyle's piece was refreshing, in part because I found both books to be a bit too earnestly romantic, trying to convince me of the significance canoeing holds for all Canadians.

I certainly wouldn't argue in the *Beaver* that canoes are without meaning to Canadians, but I think both books would have benefited from a much more thorough exploration of the limits of this argument. Raffan addresses the question in terms of regionalism and culture, but only touches on class and gender. And ultimately, he argues for "the idea of the canoe ... as a pan-Canadian phenomenon." He asks the reader to think metaphorically and see

the canoe as being about "relationships: between people and place, nature and technology, and among people who would pull together in a common purpose." Shanna Balazs, however, in "The Representation of Aboriginal Culture within the Canadian Canoe Museum" in Jennings et al., challenges this nation-building approach. She argues that Euro-Canadians perceive the canoe as a historical and recreational craft while many First Nations see canoes as sacred entities. For her, the difference is significant and she is much less concerned than Raffan to resolve it. Of course, a shared history does not have to be an identical history in terms of meaning or experience, and perhaps, in the end, it is in these varied meanings that the significance of the canoe to Canadians lies.

Reviewed by **Meg Stanley**, historian at Commonwealth Historic Resource Management, Vancouver, B.C., and a canoeing aficionado.




## Pioneers of the New Nationalism

***Pauline Jewett: A Passion for Canada*** and ***Walter Gordon and the Rise of Canadian Nationalism*** offer critical insight into the foundations of Canada's new nationalism of the 1960s and 1970s and the role played by Pauline Jewett and Walter Gordon in defining it.

Jewett and Gordon were former Liberal colleagues, Ontario MPs, and members of the Committee for an Independent Canada (CIC), a high profile organization dedicated to reducing Canadian dependence on United States. They championed their brand of nationalism from different platforms. First female president of Burnaby, British Columbia's Simon Fraser University, Jewett spoke out on the need to hire Canadian instructors on university campuses. Gordon was a Toronto businessman and public servant primarily concerned with foreign investment in the Canadian economy.

Jewett, a Queen's University and Harvard-trained academic, was one of the few politicians who successfully crossed the floor to another political party. Finding no role for herself with the Liberals and troubled by its implementation of the War Measures Act in 1970, she joined the New Democratic Party and was a sitting B.C. member from 1979 to 1988. She was methodical, dedicated, and hard working, involving herself in many key issues, including the constitutional debate and Meech Lake Accord, peace and disarmament, women's rights, and Canada's place in world affairs.

After leaving Parliament, Jewett served as chancellor of Ottawa's Carleton University. She had come full circle as this is where she originally taught before entering politics. Jewett was awarded the Order of Canada in recognition of her work in politics and academia and was also made a Privy Councillor shortly before her untimely death from cancer in 1992.

Judith McKenzie, the author, a political science teacher at Sir Wilfrid Laurier University, never met Jewett and acknowledges a dearth of written material about her life. As a result, she often relies on anecdotal details and contemporary letters or interviews to tell Jewett's story.

Much of what Jewett did and said is examined from a feminist perspective. This would undoubtedly have pleased Jewett, herself a feminist. But the book suffers as a result. McKenzie states without any proof that it was particularly offensive for women that votes were sometimes bought with bottles of whisky on the 1962 rural Ontario hustings. She claims that Jew-

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ett lost her Northumberland riding in 1965 because of gender discrimination. This might be a stretch. There is virtually nothing in the book about her constituency work, and Jewett may have lost the riding by dwelling on national issues at the expense of solving grassroots problems. It may also be that she simply lost to a better candidate. Her Conservative opponent was George Hees, hardly a lightweight challenger. McKenzie says that there were only a few women in the House of Commons by the 1980s and most were not given a meaningful role. She looks at the Liberals in support of this proposition, failing to acknowledge that the ruling Conservatives actively promoted women like Flora MacDonald and Kim Campbell to the Cabinet.

*Pauline Jewett* lacks an overall balance and would have benefited from more extensive research, particularly through the increased use of primary sources. To give McKenzie credit, she does address Jewett's fight with cancer and alcoholism with sensitivity.

Gordon was the quintessential entrepreneur turned politician. He approached his work with enthusiasm and seemed impatient to get the job done quickly, seldom canvassing the full repercussions of his proposals. Nevertheless, he was blunt and direct about the need for Canada to limit foreign ownership in the economy. He warned about the dangers of free trade to his dying day in 1987, adding that it could eventually lead to loss of political sovereignty.

He reached the pinnacle of power in 1963 when Prime Minister Lester Pearson appointed him finance minister, although he had no formal economics training. This was his reward for rebuilding party fortunes after electoral defeat at the hands of John Diefenbaker's Conservatives. Gordon's fall from grace was almost immediate, when some caucus members distanced themselves from his unworkable first budget. Although he remained in politics for another five years, Gordon never fully recovered. Bruised and feeling betrayed by Pearson for promises not kept, he left Parliament to help form the CIC, serving as its first honorary chairman.

Azzi's book is extensive and thoroughly researched, although at times Gordon himself is merely a sidebar. A history teacher at Carleton University, Azzi sometimes pays more attention to the roots of English Canadian economic nationalism than Gordon himself. The author only brings him back into the story where required. Perhaps this is why Gordon and nationalism share equal billing in the book's title.

Reading *Walter Gordon and the Rise of Canadian Nationalism* one senses that Gordon, while earnest and intensely passionate about Canada, lacked the analytical skills to fully comprehend the issues before him. This is a consistent theme throughout the book. Whether it was vanity, loyalty, or the need for power that pushed him forward in the face of mounting criticism is unclear. Enormously productive in private life, Gordon, Azzi suggests, had only a qualified success in his short-lived political career. His economic policies were largely rejected by the 1990s, and foreign investment was welcomed, not feared. More lasting were his programs to enhance Canada's social safety net. These are his most important legacies. Medicare, the Canada Pension Plan, and the Canada Student Loans program, essentially the same today as they were in the 1960s, were developed through Gordon's efforts.

Something must be said about Azzi's endnotes. At almost 60 pages, there are far too many. This could have been reduced by putting many in the text, thereby also cutting down on the annoying need to constantly refer to the back for further details.

Jewett and Gordon complemented each other. Their means were different but their objectives the same. They both wanted an independent, competitive, and tolerant Canada. Jewett's nationalism manifested itself in intellectual and international issues. To her the need to "Canadianize" universities and limit American influence over Canada's foreign affairs were crucial. Gordon focused on economic nationalism and ways to reduce American influence in the Canadian economy. Surprisingly, each only gets passing reference in the other's book.

McKenzie and Azzi examine the development of post-Second World War notions of nationhood and what it means to be Canadian with conviction. Both books feature an interesting and wide-ranging selection of photographs, many likely never before published. Even with their faults, these books lucidly show that much of what Jewett and Gordon said and did still has considerable application.

Reviewed by **Gavin Murphy**, an Ottawa lawyer and New Democrat candidate in the 1984 general election.

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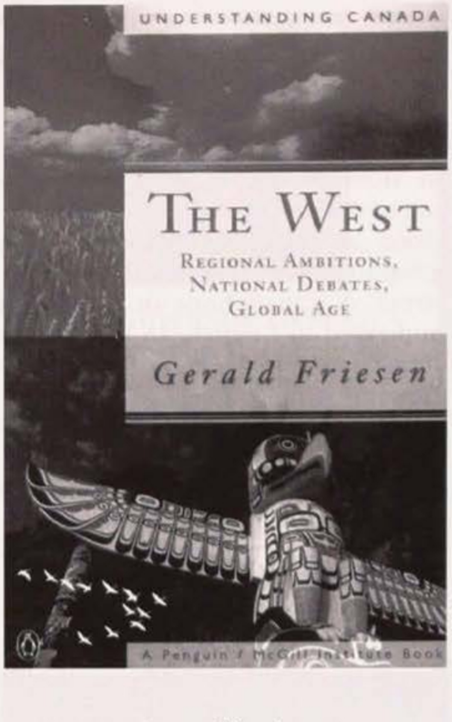
"Western alienation" is a simplistic term used to express the vague dissatisfaction of westerners toward those who live east of the Manitoba-Ontario border. When pressed to explain this resentment, westerners will cite oil policies, the CF-18 decision, and official bilingualism as tap roots for this disaffection. One of the merits of Gerald Friesen's new book, ***The West***, is that it carefully traces the evolution of the West and the social and economic bases of the resentment that westerners feel toward residents of eastern Canada.

Part 1 begins with a careful discussion of how the West has evolved from two regions to a single region with four unique provinces. This is the most complex of Friesen's theses and he presents strong arguments to support this interpretation. For the first seventy-five years of confederation, British Columbia and the Prairies comprised two quite separate regions. While resource prices affected both, in British Columbia, the forest and mining industries created a large working class that turned to unionism to equate the social order. On the Prairies, family farms created individualistic approaches to life that only after the Great Depression spawned collective solutions to international price collapse in the form of the farm cooperative movement. In both B.C. and the Prairie provinces, fluctuations in world prices produced recurring boom and bust periods before the Second World War.

Part 2 is devoted to showing how each province is moving down its own path. In the postwar period, a range of technological and global changes acted on all four provinces. Although primary-resource exports remain at the core of the four economies, the growth of the service sector has stabilized incomes. The application of technology to farming has created economies of scale, and many smaller family farms have abandoned their homesteads. The introduction of free trade acts as a catalyst for manufacturing in Winnipeg, government intervention supports high technology in Saskatoon, low taxes foster entrepreneurial fervour in Calgary, and Asia fuels growth in Vancouver. Friesen skillfully draws these contrasts and shows the uniqueness of each province on a larger canvas of growing global pressure.

Throughout the book, Friesen pauses to highlight important dichotomies. The discussion on aboriginal rights and issues is especially insightful. He makes a strong argument for why the aboriginal movement is more developed in the West than the East. The presentation of the Nisga'a treaty and racial incidents on the Prairies is important for every resident in western Canada to understand. Native land claims in B.C. now exceed the total area of the province. Friesen clearly believes that every western Canadian must comprehend the legal and moral basis for these claims or the debate is sure to become more difficult.

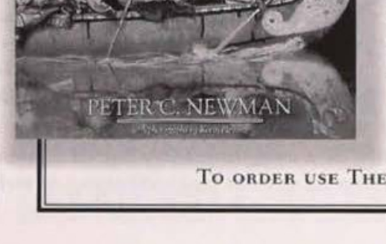
Throughout the book, Friesen highlights the ideological differences between social democrats, who advocate intervention to promote social and economic development, and the conservatives, who favour market-based solutions. Although he clearly sympathizes with the social democrats, the discussion is balanced enough. Especially interesting examples are the strike at Fletcher Challenge, a lumber-paper giant, and the Klein revolution. In B.C., the prolonged strike at Fletcher Challenge is interpreted by Friesen as modern class warfare, where global




competition is used by the company as a rationale for rolling back previous rights won by the workers. This labour dispute becomes a metaphor for social and economic relations in B.C. and the touchstone of political life. In Alberta, the Klein revolution, powered by oil and gas revenues, has created the lowest taxes in Canada and promoted a "can-do" entrepreneurial vision.

In Part 3, Friesen draws together important threads. He explores diversity, especially racial tensions, debates over the role of the family and civil relations, struggles between promarket

**An Illustrated History *of the* Hudson's Bay Company**
***by Peter C. Newman***




This is a lavishly illustrated history of the HBC from its founding as a fur trader in 1670 to the national retail giant it is today. Dozens of full-colour and black-and-white photos, plus sketches, drawings and maps complement the spirited text by Peter C. Newman, one of Canada's leading authors and journalists. 223 pp., index, bibliography, 7-page chronology of HBC history. 9" x 12" approx., cloth. *Original publisher's price: $45.*

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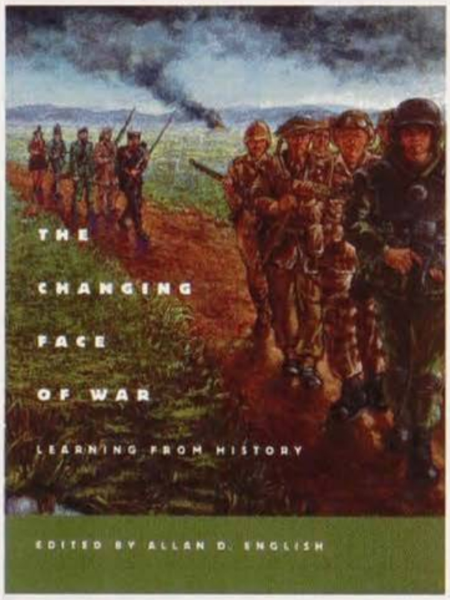
and prointerventionist advocates, and how language affects the West's perception of Quebec.

The latter discussion is instructive. In Montreal or Quebec, a young person easily learns English through television (especially American channels), going to movies, and hearing it on the street. A francophone in Quebec is immersed in English. In the West a young person rarely hears French spoken and is more likely to encounter German, Ukrainian, or Chinese. This could be seen as an interesting footnote until one realizes that access to federal government jobs and promotion in eastern-based companies depends on knowing both official languages of Canada. The typical westerner knows that such positions are open only to a tiny elite. From this builds resentment, and sympathy for official bilingualism wanes.

This volume should be mandatory reading for all Canadians. Westerners need to understand the forces that shape their social and political environment. Those in the East must appreciate the deepening fault line that runs down the Manitoba-Ontario border. Fifty years ago, the products of the farms and factories in the West travelled east. Now most of the goods and services are directed south to the U.S. and west to Asia. With this economic realignment, it is inevitable that socially and politically, the West will continue to orient away from the rest of Canada.

Reviewed by **Greg Mason**, managing partner of Prairie Research Associates, Winnipeg, and associate professor of economics at the University of Manitoba.




## War Lessons

Allan D. English, chief instructor of the war studies program at Royal Military College, Kingston, has assembled in ***The Changing Face of War*** a collection of seventeen essays by his students covering the evolution of warfare over a two-hundred-year period. Six of them look at evolving warfare in the past, five are concerned with unconventional warfare, mostly in Asia, and the last six deal with various future themes. Many of the authors are serving officers in the Canadian military and so a continuous Canadian content is evident throughout. Reflecting Liddell Hart's anguished cry to military personnel to learn from studying the lessons of history, English aptly quotes Bismarck to the effect that "Fools say they learn by experience. I prefer to profit by other people's experience."

At first glance one might be skeptical of the broad and ambitious scope of this collection of essays. Yet for this reviewer, *The Changing Face of War* is a fascinating read, full of carefully articulated lessons and useful conclusions for the present age. Each essay follows a strict analytical format with both conclusions and detailed footnotes.

The first section contains interesting essays on the influence of Von Clausewitz on Canadian military doctrine, manoeuvre warfare versus attrition, Von Moltke and the Prussian general staff, Tukhachevsky and the Soviet art of Deep Battle, and army renewal under Von Seecht and the Reichswehr. There are some real lessons here for the thinking Canadian commander, and this is emphasized by an inspiring study of the Canadian Corps in World War I and the impact upon it of Sir Julian Byng, who laid both the foundations of the Corp's esprit de corps and its splendid fighting efficiency.

The second section zeroes in im-

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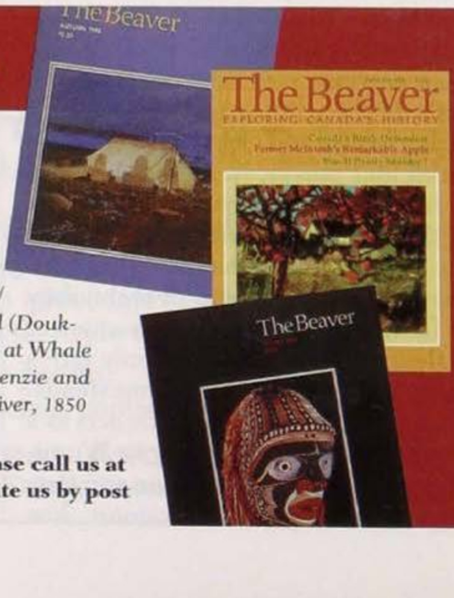


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mediately on that master of revolution, Mao Zedong, who "was able to take the ideas from diverse sources and synthesize them into a strategy that was rooted in Chinese history and accepted the peasants' nationalism." The next essay applies the thought of Mao in the First Indochina War fought by the Vietminh. This conflict fed on the discontent that had long been sown by the time of the Japanese occupation and merely sealed the fate of French colonialism.

The essay on General Giap portrays the legendary Indochinese leader's brilliance in "plying the waters between politics and war" in a manner that left U.S. military doctrine at a complete and fatal disadvantage. Yet it is astonishing to read that Giap's forces suffered 2.5 million fatalities between 1963 and 1975. Victory came at a high price indeed, but worse was yet to come. Giap won the war, but lost the peace, with Vietnam today unified but economically backward and internationally isolated. An essay applying counterinsurgency doctrine to peacekeeping forms an appropriate Canadian conclusion to this section.

The third section of *The Changing Face of War* looks into the future at computers and strategy, where it is argued that combat arms have been the most conspicuous beneficiaries of the form of mechanization introduced by computers in warfare. Other essays detail the development of stealth technology in aircraft, strategy in support of Space Control, conventional arms control and intelligence, the relationship between democracy and war, and finally, the media and the conduct of war. The speculative nature of these essays is an encouragement to the reader to carry out private research and keep up to date with journal literature.

If Allan English is serious in his commitment to learning from history, then we can look forward to a second volume exploring many of the gaps that still face the Canadian military in its involvement with a world of ethnic wars.

Reviewed by **Peter St. John**, senior scholar, political studies, University of Manitoba. Dr. St. John lectures regularly at the U.S. Air Force Special Operations School in Florida.

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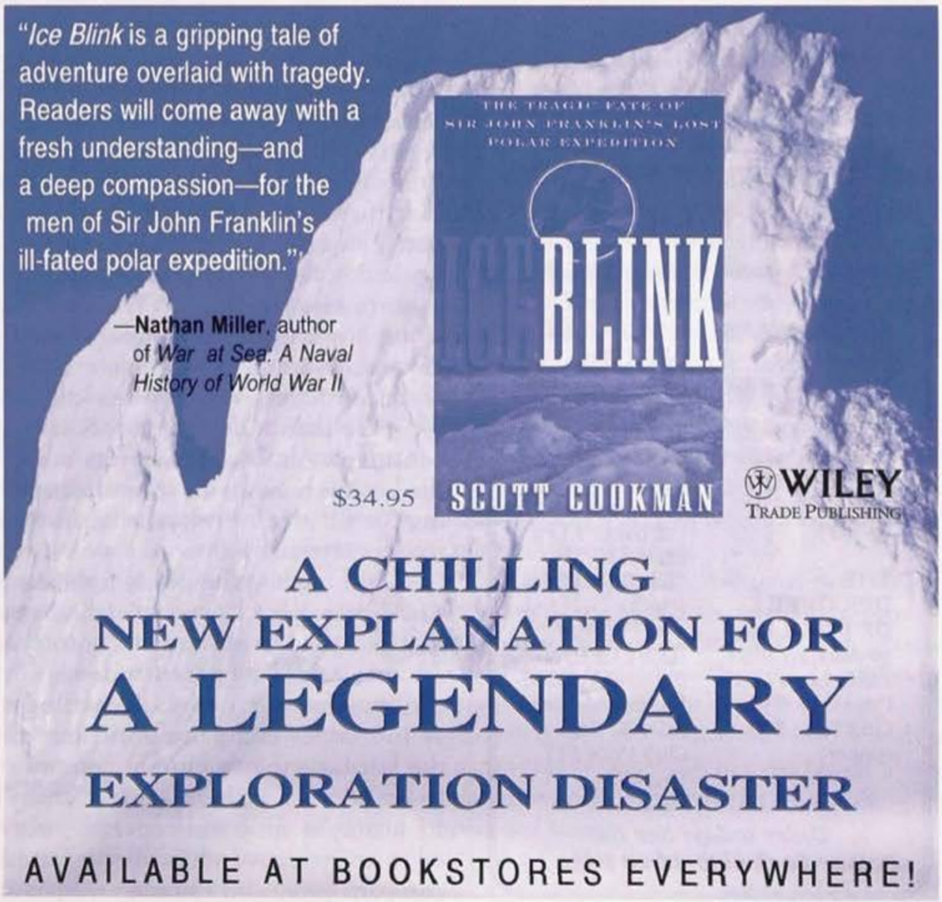

CHRIS RAIBLE

# Booknotes

For a magazine focusing on Canadian history to continue to be called the *Beaver* is due in no small measure to Harold Innis. In his weighty work, *The Fur Trade in Canada*, he concluded "Canada emerged as a political entity with boundaries largely determined by the fur trade." Despite all the north-south trade pulls of our time, it was the east-west thrust of fur trading from the seventeenth through the nineteenth centuries that created this country. Innis's economic history (and geography), first published seventy years ago, has recently been reissued, a reminder of how significant a study it is, essential if not easy reading.

While Innis presents a macro view, other new books zoom in on specific aspects of fur trade history – tiles, as it were, in the greater mosaic. Fur traders were required to keep journals of their daily lives, their encounters with nature, their trafficking with natives. Jean Steinbruck, at an XY Company post in the Great Slave Lake area, wrote his 1802–1803 notes on birchbark after he ran out of paper. Nuage has published them as a fascinating facsimile copy, in colour no less, complete with French transcriptions and English translations of the daily entries. *The Yellowknife Journal* is an extraordinary volume, of interest both as an artifact and as a record of the particulars of one man's winter. Harry Duckworth's informative introduction provides a larger perspective.

As academics are wont to do, fur-trade scholars meet periodically to present papers to each other. A selection of such presentations at a 1995 Halifax conference is to be found in *New Faces of the Fur Trade*. I was particularly intrigued by the chapter about a confrontation in 1831–1832 between two chief factors of the Hudson's Bay Company in Lower Canada. One, the erratic and self-centered James Clarke, found himself under the direction of the obsessively bureaucratic James Keith. The chronicling of their duelling, as it were, I found quite intriguing. Not surprisingly, the company man eventually won.

Early in the nineteenth century, Britain's Lord Selkirk bought into the Hudson's Bay Company to use it as a vehicle for his Canadian settlement schemes. The tragedy of the Red River settlement is an oft-told tale, but University of Manitoba historian J.M. Bumsted's *Fur Trade Wars* places that sad story in its larger historical, economic, and geographic context. Locked in fierce competition were the upstart Montreal-based North West Company and the century-and-half-old HBC. Here is the complete drama of the hostilities – yes, the wars – fought for more than a decade across half a continent. Almost dense in its detail, the book is nonetheless essential reading for fur-trade enthusiasts, *Beaver* readers especially.

Until reading the newly published *The North West Company*, I had not realized that its absorption into the HBC in 1821 did not mean its demise. It continued as the northern department of the larger company until, late in the last (i.e., the twentieth) century it again became an independent entity. Its history is aptly and concisely related in an attractive and well-illustrated company-produced volume.

Violent rivalries, often prompted by fur-trade competition, erupted into the wars that stain the history of North America after its "discovery." Especially in the late seventeenth and eighteenth centuries were the hostilities intense, involving both native inhabitants and European intruders. *A Few Acres of Snow* attempts to recite the whole bloody story of "the French and Indian Wars" (as the Americans call them), the battles between England and France that were fought on this side of the Atlantic. Rarely have I been so eager to open a book and so glad to close it. A more opinionated recounting of history I have never read. Its scope is magnificent, its treatment deplorable. Its author depicts all natives as savages, most Protestants as untrustworthy, and Wolfe's Plains of Abraham victory as due to an incredible French betrayal. He is minute in much of his detail, but he was apparently so tired by the time he got to the battles for Quebec that he omitted the entire year 1758. For a succinct, straightforward telling of those times, read the chapter "The Forts in New France" in John Keegan's *Warpaths*.

If you are interested in some of the specifics of hostile encounters of pre-Conquest North America, I suggest two other books. *The Name of War* describes the 1675–1676 Algonquin uprising against Puritan colonists in southern New England that came to be called "King Philip's War." Also, the new paperback edition of *The Good Regiment* chronicles the three-year stay of the first French regiment sent to Canada to quell the Iroquois. Both these books are worthwhile not only for their recounting of specific histories, but also for their reflections on the enduring significance of the events.

A book on an entirely different topic is Jacalyn Duffin's *History of Medicine*. Its author, a professor at Queen's, refers to her work as a textbook, but it should appeal to a much wider readership. Its chapters are topical rather than chronological (anatomy, pharmacology, epidemics, obstetrics, etc.), its mood is humanitarian as well as scientific, and its illustrations are quite wonderful. Moreover, it includes considerable Canadian content yet is not a Canadian history.


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*Letters, continued from page 3*

## The peril of Pauline

AFTER READING "The Mohawk Princess," [October/November 1999] I'd like to make the following observations regarding the Princess's illness in Orillia, diagnosed as erysipelas (brain fever).

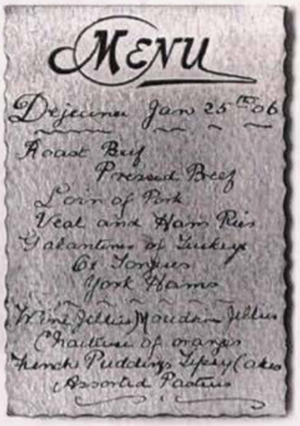
Erysipelas is a skin infection due to group A beta-hemolytic streptococci. The skin is inflamed and indurated, the margins have a raised, firm border. The skin lesion is usually associated with fever, vomiting, and irritability. Streptococcal bacteremia, blood stream infection, may follow streptococcal disease of the skin, and meningitis, osteomyelitis, arthritis, or pyelonephritis may result.

Pauline may have had meningococcal meningitis. This disease may be complicated by adrenal hemorrhage and purpura, bleeding into the skin. Later sloughing of the skin over the purpuric areas may occur. This would explain her scarred face and cropped hair.

At any rate, this was an interesting article about an interesting pioneer woman with a complicated medical problem.

**Robert B. Tudor, M.D.**
**Bismarck, North Dakota**

## Lyrical lunch


MENU
Roast Beef
Pressed Beef
Loin of Pork
Veal and Ham Pies
York Hams
Assorted Pastries

I ENJOYED THE ARTICLE in the October/November issue about Pauline Johnson. I was born and raised in Fort Qu'Appelle, Saskatchewan, part of the Qu'Appelle Valley which her poem made known. I found the enclosed menu in my archives, along with a notation that this was the menu served to her at the Valley Hotel, here in Fort Qu'Appelle, during her visit in 1906.

**Jack Lowe**
**Fort Qu'Appelle, Saskatchewan**

## Scriven scribe replies

ROBERT BOWLEY'S LETTER in the December 1999/January 2000 issue about my article "A Prayer For Joseph Scriven" [August/September 1999] was really something to behold. It purports to point out errors in my work and warn readers about speculations. But almost all his "corrections" are without foundation. Any history aficionado who believed him was done a disservice.

Commenting on my theories about what may have happened the night the saintly Scriven mysteriously died, Bowley wrote "it is generally accepted by those who have studied his life that he became inebriated purposely and fell into Sackville Creek." *None* of the two or three people who have seriously "studied" Scriven's life has ever claimed that the holy man who gave us "What A Friend We Have in Jesus" died in a drunken stupor. Bowley's irresponsible statement blackens the memory of an admirable man. His speculation was based on the remark of a single person in Scriven's only biography, one who wasn't born when Scriven died.

He also categorically asserted that the famous hymn "was finished long before Scriven came to Rice Lake." I can assure readers that no one knows when it was finished, though there is evidence to suggest, as I did, that it was begun in Damascus, expanded in southwestern Ontario, and completed in the Rice Lake area.

Bowley was also purposefully picky. He tried to insinuate that when I stated that the Pengelley family (Scriven's employers) received their land "through Sir Isaac Brock," I was claiming Brock gave it directly to them. If I had intended that I would have said that. The land was given to Brock's brother (Mrs. Pengelley's father) because of the great man's service to Canada.

He also claimed I wrote a supposition-filled "diatribe" against David Kidd. A central subject of the Scriven biography is a strong and persistent Rice Lake rumour (alive to this day) that Kidd murdered Scriven. Any Scriven historian worth his salt must address that issue thoroughly. My article actually defended Kidd against the rumour, stating several times that it exists without good evidence. But to ignore it is to stick one's head in the sand.

The only statements Bowley made that might have some credence were that Robert Pengelley was properly Commander not Captain, and that Scriven's fiancée was Eliza not Elizabeth. Both are debatable points. I actually referred to Eliza as Eliza more often than not.

If Bowley had simply made those two slender points I would not have been moved to respond. But his other incorrect, misinformed, and speculative statements had to be addressed. It is difficult enough to get facts straight in the first place, but to have them denied and twisted afterward is really of no use to anyone, especially to those people about whom we write, whose memories we should respect and honour.

**Shane Peacock**
**Baltimore, Ontario**

*continued*

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### Flying for England

*Long-distance flying was dangerous in 1919, but Canadian bomber pilot Harry Yates loved a challenge. His secret mission – to reach Cairo from London in record-breaking time. With him were two passengers. One of them was Lawrence of Arabia.* BY GUY SIMSER

### Arthur's Secret

*Presidents of the United States must be born on U.S. soil. So says the American Constitution. But evidence suggests Chester Arthur, the twenty-first president, was born in a foreign land. Canada, perhaps? S-h-h, don't tell the Americans.* BY PAT MACADAM

### Ten Means Death

*Number symbolism was a powerful force among the French in the seventeenth century. Oddly enough, it was a powerful force among the Huron, too. Did French and Huron find common ground in the universal mystic power of numbers?* BY JOYCE WRIGHT

*Letters, continued from page 51*

## Do you want fries with that?

I READ WITH INTEREST the article "All the News That's Fit to Sprint" [August/September 1999]. In it was described an arrangement at the Entertainment House at Granville Ferry where the hurried express rider could ride his horse into the barroom through a large opening on the wall, "order a drink, down it, fling coin in payment and ride out again."

Could this be the first recorded "drive-through" facility in Canada? North America?

***Paul Avis***
***Etobicoke, Ontario***

## Banff is better

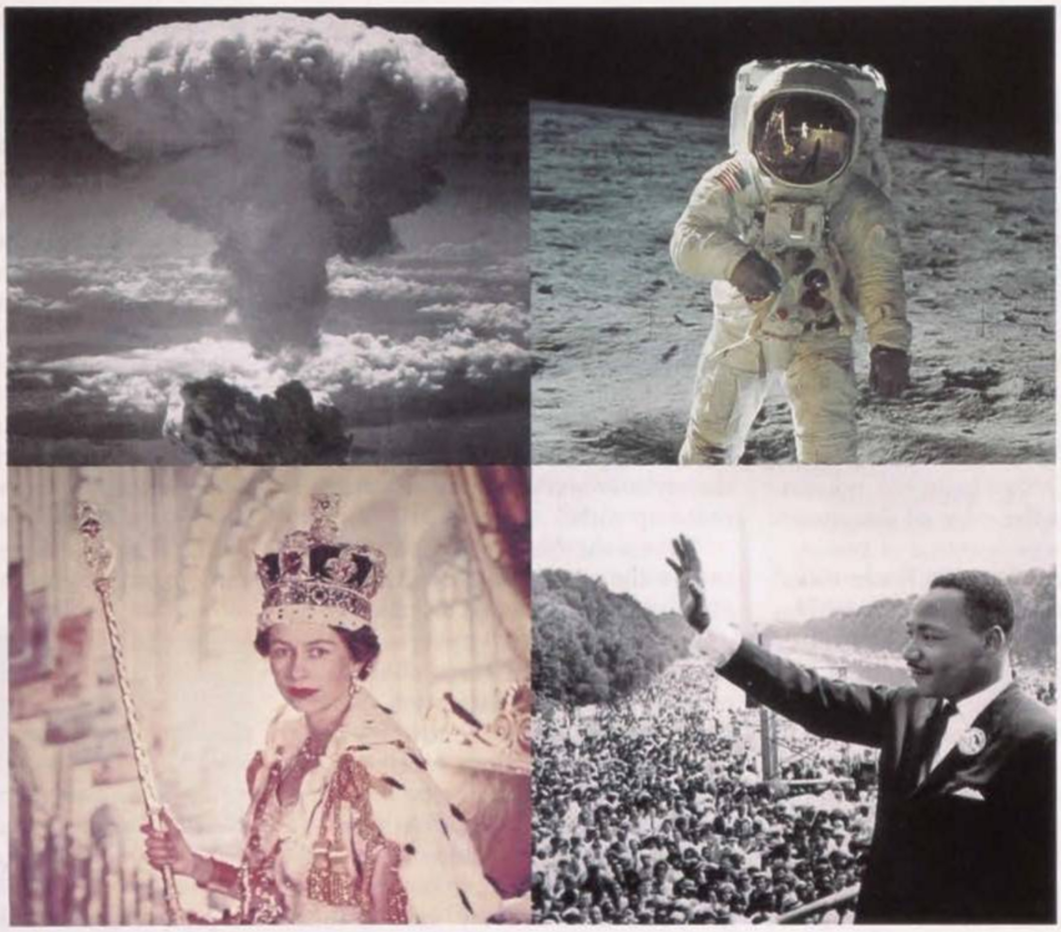
I WAS QUITE DISAPPOINTED with the closing paragraphs of Karen Wonders otherwise excellent article ["A Sportsman's Eden Part II: A Wilderness Besieged," December 1999/January 2000]. Overdevelopment is not threatening the survival of Banff National Park. Banff townsite's boundaries were set in 1990 and the town cannot grow beyond it. The townsite represents less than 1% of the total area of BNP. We do however have a lot of redevelopment in the townsite in which old buildings are being torn down or renovated and replaced with newer energy-efficient buildings and systems. I have lived here for twenty-two years and in my eyes the park is in better shape today than it was when I arrived; pollution control is vastly superior today, and so is accommodation and traffic movement.

Unfortunately, a major highway and rail line run through the park. They aren't going to go away, so we have to learn how to live with them and adapt so that they don't impact the park in a negative way. The highway only sees bumper to bumper traffic where it narrows down to two lanes. Since the government twinned and fenced the highway from the east gates to Eisenhower Junction, there has been a drastic reduction in the number of animals and humans being killed or maimed. It's not perfect but a huge improvement over the old highway.

Banff National Park is a wonderful place and will continue to be so for many generations to come, provided of course if it is sensibly managed and funded.

***Ken Riordon***
***Banff, Alberta***

# THE 20TH CENTURY WAS SO REMARKABLE, WE'RE RUNNING IT AGAIN.



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CHRISTOPHER **Moore**

# Detecting Canada's Art History

It's a kind of detective work, he says, trying to explain both the rather extraordinary work he does and what attracts him to it. "I'm about the only freelance curator who works in both the contemporary and historical fields of Canadian art." When someone in Canada has a problem, a challenge, or an opportunity involving images of Canada's history, as often as not a call will reach Robert Stacey at the Archives of Canadian Art and Design in an old industrial building on the edge of downtown Toronto.

Not long ago, Penguin Books called Stacey about their remarkable new historical novel, *Isobel Gunn* by Audrey Thomas. Could he find the right historical image for the cover? Another call came from Nanaimo, B.C., where a team of citizens trying to save the historical murals in a local hotel wanted an expert's eye. Meanwhile, making the rounds at a Toronto art-auction house, Stacey looked at a portrait attributed to Paul Kane being readied for sale, and raised doubts. Could this attribution really be verified?

Stacey outlined the problems with the Kane portrait. It is a workmanlike portrayal, but when it was done in the 1830s, Paul Kane had barely begun to paint; his known portraits from this era are crude daubs. And Stacey quickly established that the documentary record linking Kane to the portrait is after-the-fact guesswork, regularly repeated but never investigated.

The auction house withdrew the portrait from sale pending further scrutiny. For Stacey, it was another

**Stacey is convinced that Canadian historical imagery deserves serious research – and that research almost always pays off.**

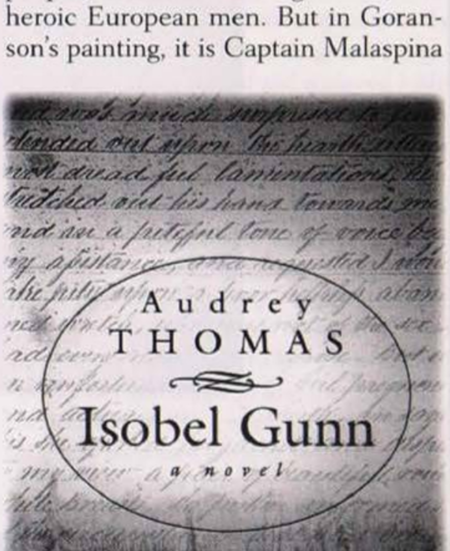
example of how thin our art-historical expertise actually is, even for artists of the importance of Kane. "We have to go back and establish the facts. We have to stop relying on hearsay and do the stylistic analysis and see what we come up with."

When the Nanaimo team working to save the murals from the Malaspina Hotel called, it sounded like another in a long, sad sequence – trying to save art that hardly anyone cares about. But even in a quick investigation, Stacey pointed out the kind of entwining links that he constantly finds waiting to be discovered in Canadian art.

"About 1900 to 1950," Stacey explains, "there was a golden age of historical mural-painting, a movement to get Canadian history into public places." The Malaspina Hotel murals, painted in 1938 by E.J. Hughes, Orville Fisher, and Paul Goranson, have been badly damaged and are now removed from their original site. Stacey had only some photos to work from, but one in particular, showing the Spanish captain Malaspina trading with chief Maquinna at Nootka Sound in 1791, kept intriguing him.

"I kept saying, 'This reminds me of something,'" he says. Then he saw it. Paul Goranson had modeled his figures on an earlier example of Canadian historical illustration, a widely published drawing entitled "Indians Trading with the French," by the famous historical illustrator Charles W. Jefferys. For Stacey, it was another example of almost invisible links woven all through Canadian historical art – the more so because Jefferys is both Stacey's grandfather and one of his recurring interests as curator and editor.

"Mural paintings became unfashionable," continues Stacey, not only as art but for the attitudes they are seen to perpetuate: too many cringing native people, defeated French generals, and heroic European men. But in Goranson's painting, it is Captain Malaspina




Finding a fresh image for the cover of Audrey Thomas's new historical novel *Isobel Gunn* required the kind of art-historical detective work that has made Robert Stacey much in demand.

who is the supplicant and the intruder, not the powerful and magnificent Maquinna. Anyway, says Stacey, "the murals are often in disrepair or covered over, but we can't just cover the story up because it embarrasses us. We can't destroy the evidence of an artistic tradition." (Nanaimo's Malaspina University College has offered to provide a home for two of the six murals.)

The commission to find artwork appropriate to Audrey Thomas's novel unleashed another of Stacey's passions. He is convinced that, even on minor projects, Canadian historical imagery deserves serious research – and that research almost always pays off. Since *Isobel Gunn* is set in southwestern Manitoba about 1806, Stacey set himself not to settle for some familiar fur-trade image, but to locate artwork specifically from that time and place.

"To do this work, it is vital to have contacts in archives, to be able to talk about what is in the collections, maybe never photographed or published. In this case, someone put me on to a reproduction in an old *Beaver* by William Richards, a rare HBC factor who made images as well as writing reports. It was in the HBC archives – and I had a cover.

"There is an episode in the book that has Isobel Gunn, her baby, and a man travelling on snowshoes. Richards's sketch shows exactly that, in the same region and drawn within a few years of the period of the book!"

As he talks of his detecting assignments, Stacey keeps circling back to the need for more work in Canadian art history. Again Paul Kane provides an example. Stacey and some colleagues are trying to bring about the first full-scale exhibition of Kane's original sketches. "Kane's well-known paintings are mix-and-match creations, using many elements from his field sketches. They are fictions, a romantic creation, totally unreliable as evidence and not intended as such. Only the field sketches and the field notes make it possible to reconstruct what Paul Kane actually saw in the West. Yet they have not been seen in bulk in Canada since 1848."

Universities and institutions have departments devoted to art and art history, but Stacey laments that "nobody is doing that obvious basic research. Students in the mainstream, in universities, are not being made to do it. They are doing theory. And our institutions are so downsized or demoralized that they can hardly help the ordinary user. Today the person who answers phone inquiries doesn't know and has not got the hands-on experience to know. It is harder and harder just to get access to what is already there."

Another Stacey target is the way historical art is routinely misused. "What really bothers me," he says, "is the laziness of historians, of art directors. A lot of writers use illustration in a very cavalier manner. They act as if everything were in the public domain and don't credit the artist or the source – partly because things get swiped so often. So one sees the same images, and the same misinformation about them, perpetuated again and again."

Stacey does not lack for projects. For the Mendel Art Gallery in Saskatoon he is curating an exhibition of Qu'Appelle Valley paintings ("After the Group of Seven went to northern Ontario, Charles Jefferys went to the Prairies, and he really discovered the Qu'Appelle Valley as a subject for art."). In Toronto, he is assembling an exhibit of the art of Daniel Wilson. Wilson, a nineteenth-century teacher and president of the University of Toronto, was a great early Darwinian – and a patron of Paul Kane – but Stacey knows he was also a noteworthy, neglected artist.

With a team of colleagues, Stacey has launched an ambitious project to create an online national image bank. He intends to build the Paul Kane project into not only an exhibition, but also a book, a film, and a digital resource. Meanwhile, the phone keeps ringing with new detecting assignments.

Can Stacey's remarkably precise and wide-ranging knowledge of Canadian art and history be sustained in a freelance career forever depending on an uncertain market, I wondered. Shouldn't he be snapped up by one of our great cultural institutions? Stacey laughs ruefully. "I've been too busy to take a job. I have too many projects on the go." ▣


## The Pierre Berton Award

**Canada's National History Society** established an award in 1994 for distinguished achievement in popularizing Canadian history. Canadian writer and popular author, Pierre Berton, was the first recipient. Mr. Berton agreed to having his name associated with the award in subsequent years.

In addition to Mr. Berton, other recipients of the Award are:

James H. Gray, Calgary, 1995
Jacques Lacoursière, Quebec City, 1996
The CRB Foundation, Montreal, 1997
Bob Johnstone, Toronto, 1998
(no award 1999)
Peter C. Newman, British Columbia, 2000

Individuals or organizations that have helped popularize Canadian history, through such means as publications, film, radio and television, theatre or volunteer service may be nominated.

Nominations are now being accepted for the 2001 Pierre Berton Award. In addition to a name and address of the nominee, nominations must be accompanied by detailed information in support of the candidate. A biography or curriculum vitae, newspaper or magazine articles, or letters of support outlining the achievements of the nominee would be welcome.

Nominations for the 2001 Pierre Berton Award must be received by May 25, 2001 and should be sent to:

**The Pierre Berton Award**
**Canada's National History Society**

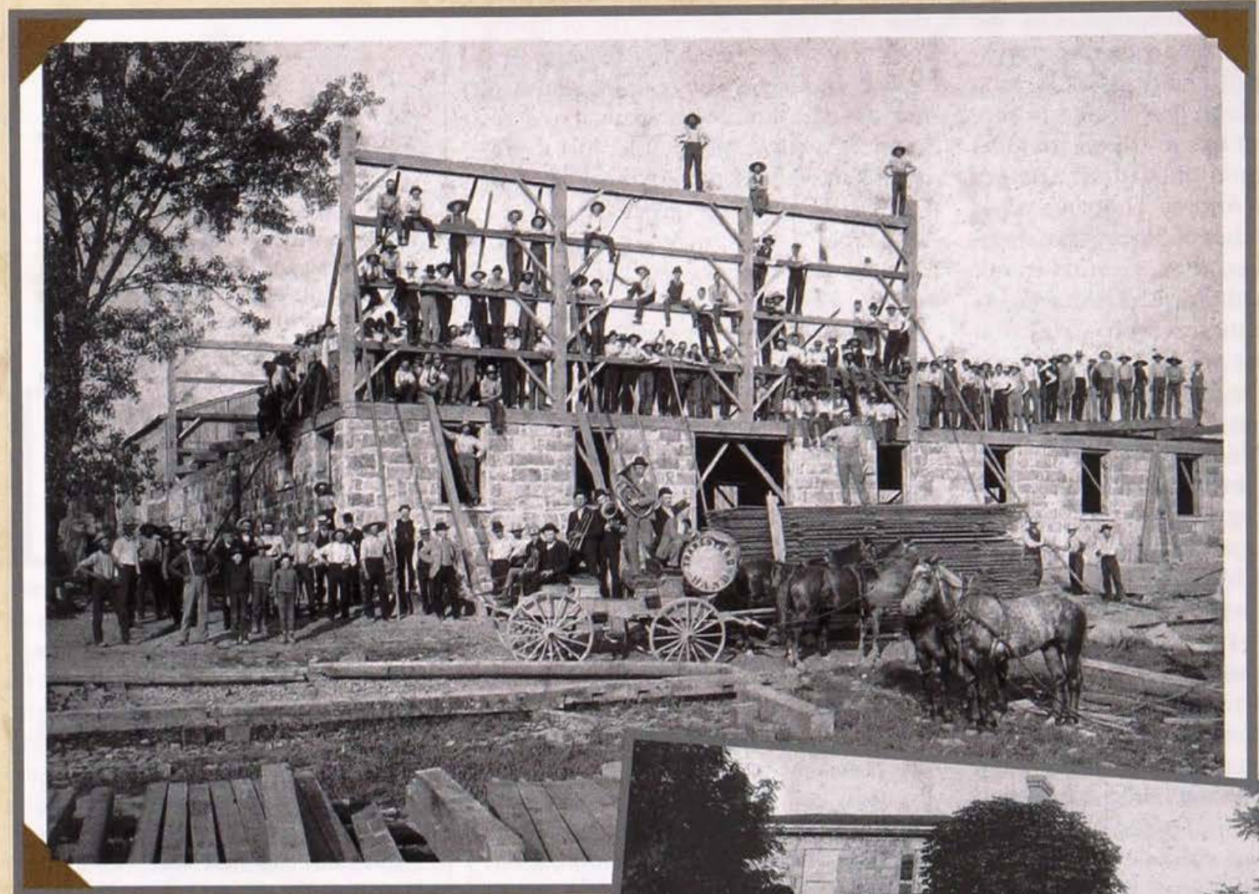
478 – 167 Lombard Avenue
Winnipeg, Manitoba R3B 0T6

If you require further information on the Award, please contact the Society at the above address, or

Phone (204) 988-9300
Fax (204) 988-9309
E-mail: cnhs@historysociety.ca

# Album

Tom Dennison, who submitted these photographs to the *Beaver*, is a retired teacher living in St. Catharines, Ontario. He reports finding them at a Thamesford yard sale twenty-five years ago. The house, below right, which dates from the 1840s, is still standing and still occupied by a scion of the Montague family. The cattle barn, top left, at twenty-six-by-fourteen metres a grand structure for its day, burned down in 1963.

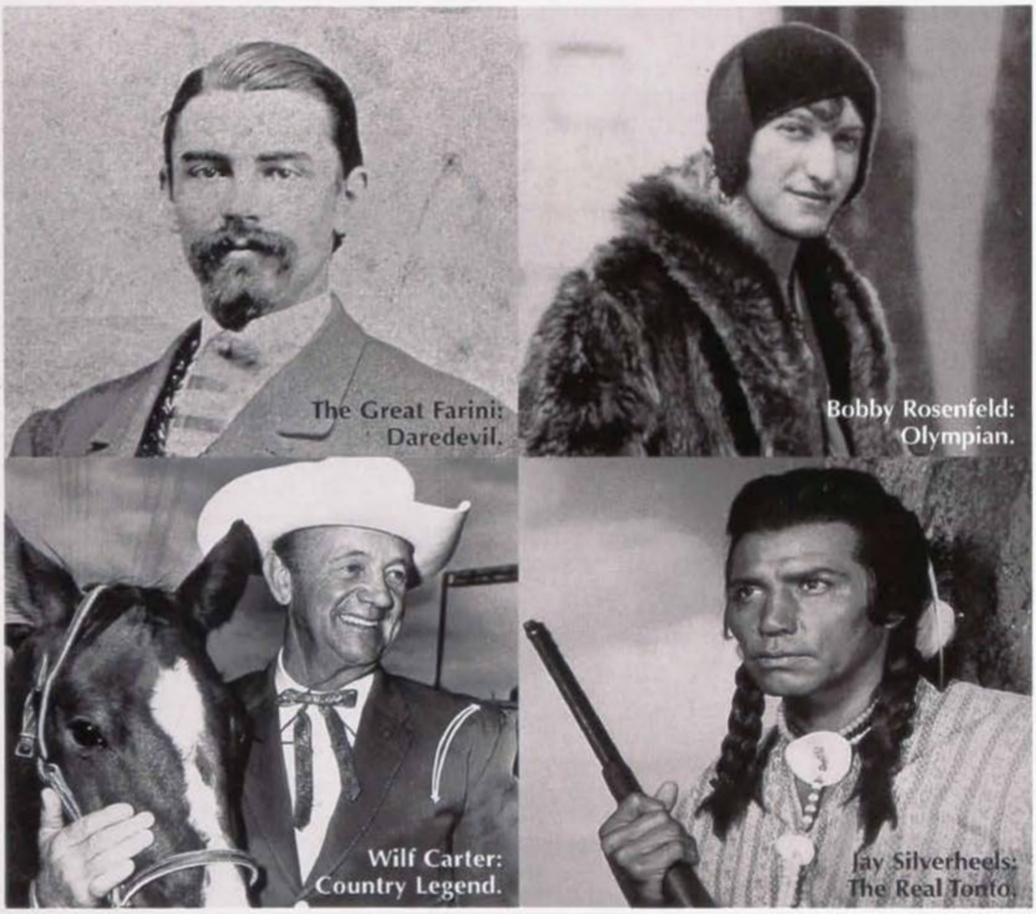


**Pre-prefab** It takes a village to raise a child, Hillary Clinton has lately opined, echoing an old African adage. Well, over a century ago, it took a village to raise a barn. There are at least one hundred men gathered around the foundation and on the beams of this nascent stone structure, which until 1963 stood a few kilometres east of Thamesford, Ontario, a town just north-east of London. In the inset picture, another sixty women (and a few men) pose, their purpose less apparent until one's eyes shift to the right and note the tables groaning with food. And in both pictures, members of the Thamesford Band figure prominently, no doubt having learned the value of publicity.

The year is 1892. The place the Montague farm. The late nineteenth century couldn't any longer be called pioneer days in southern Ontario, but pioneer traditions held strong, and when a barn wanted raising, or logs required hauling, or quilts needed sewing, people would gather together to help each other in a pioneer tradition called a "bee." Today, if we wished to build a barn of similar size and substance, we would similarly consider a bee. "B" for building contractor. In the Yellow Pages.

**Do you have an old photograph** that captures a moment, important or ordinary, in our country's history? If you would like to submit it for possible publication, have it copied at your local photo shop (please don't send priceless originals) and send it to: Album, c/o *The Beaver*, #478–167 Lombard Ave., Winnipeg, MB, R3B 0T6. Include a brief description of the photo, including its date and location. If possible, identify people in the photograph and provide further information about the event or situation illustrated. To have your copy returned, please include a stamped, self-addressed envelope.

# CANADIANS DON'T BRAG ABOUT THEIR LIVES. SO WE WILL.




**THE CANADIANS**

**WEDNESDAYS 9PM ET/PT**

"The Canadians: Biographies of a Nation" features the real stories of the saints and sinners who built this country and have left a lasting impression. Part of Canadian History Wednesdays.

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HISTORY TELEVISION

# HISTORY

TELEVISION™

| EASTERN | MONDAY | TUESDAY | WEDNESDAY | THURSDAY | FRIDAY | SATURDAY | SUNDAY |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| 8:00 AM | | | THE CAMPBELLS | | | SENSE OF HISTORY | SENSE OF HISTORY |
| 8:30 AM | | | THE WAY WE WERE | | | ORIGINS | ORIGINS |
| 9:00 AM | | | SKETCHES OF OUR TOWN | | | CANADIAN HISTORY | THE 20TH CENTURY |
| 9:30 AM | | | IT SEEMS LIKE YESTERDAY | | | | |
| 10:00 AM | | | SKETCHES OF OUR TOWN | | | | |
| 10:30 AM | | | FASHION QUEST (HISTORY BITES STARTING APRIL 10) | | | | |
| 11:00 AM | | | THE UNTOUCHABLES (COMBAT STARTING APRIL 25) | | | WORLDS BEST DOCUMENTARIES | WORLDS BEST MINI-SERIES |
| 11:30 AM | | | | | | | |
| 12:00 PM | | | RAT PATROL | | | | |
| 12:30 PM | | | GREAT CRIMES | | | | |
| 1:00 PM | | | HISTORY ON FILM | | | THE WILD WEST | SCORCHED EARTH |
| 1:30 PM | | | | | | | |
| 2:00 PM | | | | | | WESTERN MATINEE | HISTORY ON FILM |
| 2:30 PM | | | | | | | |
| 3:00 PM | | | | | | | |
| 3:30 PM | | | FASHION QUEST (HISTORY BITES STARTING MAY 1) | | | | |
| 4:00 PM | | | DESTINATION: HISTORY | | | | |
| 4:30 PM | | | | | | HISTORY BITES | HISTORY BITES |
| 5:00 PM | | | THE UNTOUCHABLES | | | ANCIENT HISTORY | HISTORY OF WAR |
| 5:30 PM | | | | | | | |
| 6:00 PM | | | IT SEEMS LIKE YESTERDAY | | | | |
| 6:30 PM | | | THE WAY WE WERE | | | | |
| 7:00 PM | | | ARCHAEOLOGY | | | DRAMA SERIES | DRAMA SERIES |
| 7:30 PM | | | FASHION QUEST (HISTORY BITES STARTING APRIL 10) | | | | |
| 8:00 PM | | | IT SEEMS LIKE YESTERDAY | | | COLD WAR | THE ROYAL HOUR |
| 8:30 PM | | | GREAT CRIMES | | | | |
| 9:00 PM | 20TH CENTURY MONDAYS | ANCIENT HISTORY TUESDAYS | CANADIAN HISTORY WEDNESDAYS | HISTORY OF WAR THURSDAYS | HISTORY ON FILM | HISTORY ON FILM | HISTORY ON FILM |
| 9:30 PM | | | | | | | |
| 10:00 PM | | | | | | | |
| 10:30 PM | | | | | | | |
| 11:00 PM | | TOUR OF DUTY | | | | | |
| 11:30 PM | | | | | | | |
| 12:00 AM | 20TH CENTURY MONDAYS | ANCIENT HISTORY TUESDAYS | CANADIAN HISTORY WEDNESDAYS | HISTORY OF WAR THURSDAYS | HISTORY ON FILM | HISTORY ON FILM | HISTORY ON FILM |
| 12:30 AM | | | | | | | |
| 1:00 AM | | | | | | | |
| 1:30 AM | | | | | | | |
| 2:00 AM | | TOUR OF DUTY | | | | | |
| 2:30 AM | | | | | | | |
| 3:00 AM | | | CENTURY OF WARFARE | | | COLD WAR | THE ROYAL HOUR |
| 3:30 AM | | | | | | | |
| 4:00 AM | | | GREAT CRIMES | | | DRAMA SERIES | DRAMA SERIES |
| 4:30 AM | | | ARCHAEOLOGY | | | | |
| 5:00 AM | | | CRUSADE IN EUROPE | | | HISTORY OF WAR | SENSE OF HISTORY |
| 5:30 AM | | | RAT PATROL | | | | ORIGINS |
| 6:00 AM | | | CENTURY OF WARFARE | | | | CABLE IN THE CLASSROOM |
| 6:30 AM | | | | | | | |
| 7:00 AM | | | FRONT PAGE CHALLENGE | | | THE CANADIANS | SENSE OF HISTORY |
| 7:30 AM | | | OLYMPICA | | | | ORIGINS |

***Program changes may occur.***